Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/livesofmostemine0001revc

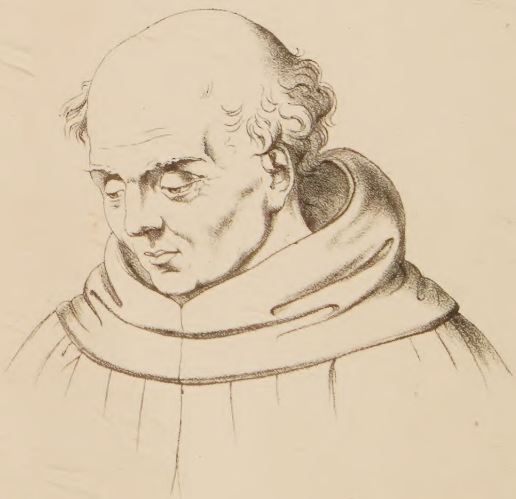
LIVES

OF THE MOST EMINENT

Painters, Sculptors, and Architects

OF

THE ORDER OF S. DOMINIC.



FRA. GIO. ANGELICO.

Forster Lith. Dublin.

LIVES

OF

THE MOST EMINENT

Painters, Sculptors & Architects

OF

THE ORDER OF S. DOMINIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

Father Marchese of the same Institute,

WITH NOTES, ETC.,

BY THE REV. C. P. MEEHAN.

Property of
COSA
Please return to
Graduate Theological
Union Library

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:
JAMES DUFFY, 7, WELLINGTON QUAY.
1852.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY J. M. O'TOOLE,
13, HAWKINS'-STREET.

TO

SIR VERE DE VERE, BARONET,

THESE VOLUMES ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

Lu. 4820

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

The Translator's Preface.

After perusing Father Marchese's work, and the many highly encomiastic notices bestowed on it by Reviewers and Ecclesiological[1] writers, it occurred to me that I would be doing valuable service to Religion, Arts, and to the Monastic Institutions particularly, if I were to give an English version of the original Italian. Encouraged by various Prelates, Clergymen, Noblemen, Protestants as well as Catholics, and also by some of the most distinguished members of the Catholic Laity in England and Ireland, I laboured according to the best of my ability to produce the following pages; and completed the translation within the brief period of two months.

Whatever may be the merit or demerit of the rendering—no one will venture to assert, after having read the following pages, that they do not abound in facts, which must have the greatest interest for the Artist, as well as for the studious of Ecclesiastical History.

Apart from such considerations, it will be admitted that there never existed any period in which it was more incumbent on persons in my position, to exercise whatever ability they possess, in order to enlighten men's minds on the real nature of Catholic dogmas, practices, and Institutions, and to expose the calumnies which have been so unsparingly showered on the Religious Orders. Indeed, it would be difficult to point out a single one of the

[1] See Dublin Review, No. L., January, 1849, and Rev. Mr. Webb's Continental Ecclesiology.

many sanctioned and cherished by the Church, which has escaped the obloquy and scorn of men who make it the grand business of their lives to defame them. Some, no doubt, have traduced the Religious Institutions, because they were either ignorant of their true history, or derived their information from sources which, far from being trustworthy, should be regarded as the merest figments, and frenetic ravings of disordered intellects. Whilst compassionating the mental blindness of men who blaspheme what they do not comprehend, what are we to think of those modern writers and itinerant ventilators of calumny, who, for their own sordid ends, wilfully and knowingly circulate these abominable misrepresentations from the pulpit, the hustings, the Senate house, and in every coterie to which they gain access? A spurious and soul destroying literature has been subsidized to perpetuate these delusions; and if we had no other reason for venerating and respecting the Religious Orders, these slanderous productions, no matter how plausible and fascinating, instead of diminishing that respect and veneration, should rather strengthen and confirm both, since the grand object of those writers is to strike at Christianity, after having striven to overthrow its strongest defences. Conspiracies against thrones and principalities have been universal in the nineteenth century, and the anarchists of succeeding ages will, doubtless, look back to it with delight; but if men should ever become more reflecting and dispassionate than they are at present, they will certainly marvel at the wide-spread conspiracy against truth, which has distinguished our era. Not many centuries ago the gold and silver vessels of the altar, the jewelled shrines wherein grateful generations had deposited the canonized bones of their Sainted benefactors, the rich endowments with which the piety of

princes and people had invested the monasteries, and the fair fields reclaimed by the industry of the monks, offered a tempting prize to the cupidity of a sacrilegious monarch, whose whole life, from the moment of his apostacy, was an uninterrupted series of heinous atrocities against the laws of God and human nature. The dispersion and murder of the Monks, and the suppression of the religious houses, are facts familiar to almost every one who reads. The legalized plunder[1] commenced by Henry VIII., was a precedent for every other despot who had the same passions to gratify; and it is almost superfluous to state, that vested rights and time-honoured immunities, were of little avail to men whose very existence was denounced as a positive evil to society. Contemplating the remains of the glorious monuments of their genius—monuments that shame the creations of a period boasting its superior enlightenment and exhaustless resources—which everywhere arrest the eye of the traveller in England, Ireland, France and Spain, one might be tempted to believe that they had been the dwellings of a race far more execrable than the viper brood of Pharisees, if history did not assure him that the men who caused this tremendous ruin, were the most relentless enemies of civilization whom the world has ever seen since the times of the Iconoclasts. Nevertheless, there was that which they could not destroy, a principle, forsooth, which defied all the expedients suggested by the most malignant ingenuity—a principle which could not be strangled by the halter, consumed by the fire, nor consigned to death by acts of Parliament. Need we say that that principle was vitality—and that we have the most

[1] The latest instance of this has been given by the Swiss infidels, who are about to seize the property of the Monks of Mont St. Bernard, if they are not deterred by the protest of the French government.

palpable proofs of its indestructibility, here and elsewhere?

This fact is so undeniable, that the enemies of the Monastic Institutions dare not gainsay it. The influences of monasticism are operating too sensibly and too beneficially on society, to allow any one to doubt for a moment of their existence. Men and women of every grade, tired of vain pursuits, and sick of a world which has no anodyne for the soul's tribulations, yearn for that repose which cannot be found outside the cloister, and for the universal revival of that blessed economy which provided an asylum for the repentant and contemplative, in times when sins and excesses were far less heinous and numerous, than they are in ours.

The evidences of that revival are as numerous as they are consoling, not only in these countries, but also in many regions of the Continent. Nay, the abortive attempts which have been made by Anglicans to modify monasticism, so as to accommodate it to their own views, are incontestible proofs of an irrepressible desire to return to that happy state, which operated so beneficially not only during the Middle Ages, but in times nearer to our own. Were it our province to enumerate the multiform blessings which monasticism is conferring on these countries, as well as on many districts of the Continent, we would be at no loss for facts to confute the calumnies of its adversaries, or to convince the sceptical of the utter falsity of all the arguments that have been urged against it. When the enemies of monasticism shall have proved that it is a high misdemeanour against Christianity to enlighten the ignorant, and preach the doctrines of the Redeemer in the moral wildernesses that are to be found in many of the cities of this empire, it will then be time to admit the truth of all that has been asserted concerning its worth-

lessness. When the scoffer and unbeliever shall have shewn that it is a work of supererogation to minister consolation to the moribund, to open a refuge for the outcast, or to convert the gorgeous palace[1] into an infirmary for those who should, otherwise, perish in the noisome damps of the cellar or in the deserted attic, then, indeed, it will be time to applaud their philanthropy and acknowledge the truth of their conclusions. In a word, when they shall have demonstrated that it is criminal to diffuse the Gospel truths, to educate youth in the fear and love of God, to devote wealth to works of mercy, and that we should discredit all that the Apostle S. John has said of this world,[2] then, but not till then, will we feel ourselves bound to consider them in the light of philosophers, proclaiming irrefragable truths.

Far from respecting monasticism for the benefits which it has bestowed on the human race, an ungrateful and malignant tribe of writers has never ceased to vilipend and depreciate it. The Novelist would deem his work imperfect, and some of its principal characters omitted, if he did not introduce a Nun or a Friar, to excite the pity or move the mirth of his readers. The one is almost invariably represented as a victim, who either entombs herself in living death, to brood and mourn over vanished hopes

[1] S. Vincent's Hospital, for example. This splendid institution, in which the Sisters of Charity perform the duty of nurses, affords medical aid to about 26,000 extern patients annually. The intern patients average about 1,500 per annum. Protestants, as well as Catholics, are freely admitted to this grand establishment, which sprung up under the auspices of the late Most Rev. Dr. Murray. Attached to this hospital is a school of clinical instruction, where lectures are delivered by Dr. O'Ferrall, one of the most eminent physicians in England or Ireland. The pathological researches of this distinguished gentleman have been translated into various languages, and are highly valued in America and on the Continent.

[2] Epistle i., v. 16.

and unrequited loves, or as a mere hypochondriac, to whose distempered vision and crazed imagination all that is bright and beautiful in this world appears like a ghastly panorama of dismal spectres, mocking the heart's affections and beckoning her on to the inevitable bourne of all humanity. Occasionally, too, when it becomes necessary to paint this character in a different light, she is represented as a victim sacrificed to the ambition or caprice of a parent, who desires to aggrandize his own house, and make some favoured first-born the inheritor of all his wealth. Nor should it be forgotten, that the priesthood has been held up to scorn and execration as abettors of acts analogous to these—as men, in a word, who have designs on the gold and chattels of their penitents, disregarding the most sacred obligations in order to compass their own sordid ends. Misrepresentations of this sort have been multiplied beyond number. In fact, there is scarcely a single work of fiction, prosaic or poetical, that does not teem with them; and the authors, who derive golden gains by catering to the morbid appetites of their readers, can afford to smile at that credulity which it is their chiefest interest to perpetuate. Nevertheless, we should congratulate ourselves that this race of traducers is fast fading away, that it is all but effete, and that their absurd figments find scarcely any other media for circulation than these wretched prints, whose object is to unchristianize and subvert society. The vindicators of Catholic doctrines and institutions are every day becoming more numerous. The genius and learning which they have consecrated to the defence of Religion, is working a wonderful revolution in men's souls, not only within these realms, but in almost every region of the Continent; and we would fain flatter ourselves that the day has gone by when any one, pretending to the name of Christian,

would tolerate a sneer or an attack on these grand virtues —Poverty, Continence, Humility, and Self-denial, which were practised and inculcated by the Redeemer himself.

But, of all the characters whom the writers of fiction, nay, and grave historians, have held up to the opprobrium of mankind, none have been more sadly maligned than the Friars. With the exception of Shakspeare, almost every dramatist represents the inmate of the cloister in the most odious light. His role in the drama, since the days of Erasmus, has ever been that of an intriguer or a debauchee ; so much so, that these two designations were sought to be made synonymous with that of a Friar. The Novelist, too, has not failed to paint him in the same colours ; and when we find any Romancist giving a Friar— who is an essential character in the structure of all Romances—the smallest amount of credit for any virtue, we may reasonably begin to think that such a writer is likely to forfeit all claims on the admiration and respect of his readers. In fact, it has been the aim of Dramatists, Essayists, Romancists, Poets, and Historians, to parade the serge-clad form, as the veriest incarnation of everything infamous, and deserving universal execration. If a murder is to be done, the Friar, whose superior knowledge has taught him how to blend the subtlest poisons, is an agent always at hand, and ready to commit the atrocity for the smallest consideration. If a throne is to be subverted, a band of these men will undertake, when bribed, to trample crowns beneath their sandalled feet, and evoke all the demons of anarchy from the abyss. If two hearts are to be united in "wedded bonds," the Friar will hasten the union by means of his ghostly influences, or prevent it by the same agencies, as it may suit his own views or those of the parties who commission him. Deeply skilled in all that

is wicked and baneful, he is, at the same time, utterly ignorant, and hostile to all that tends to promote the weal and happiness of society!

This, in sober earnestness, is no exaggerated portraiture of the Monk, or Friar, as painted by those who have had a decided interest in blackening and defaming their characters. This gross and scandalous distortion of truth is stereotyped in thousands of volumes, in almost every language; and it grieves one to think, that generation after generation has lived and passed away, believing that these horrid fabrications were almost tantamount to metaphysical certainties. The pains and penalties enacted against those men here and elsewhere, the fiendish malignity with which they have been banned and pursued in almost every realm of Europe, and the unscrupulous spoliation of their churches, shrines, libraries, and endowments, while they reflect eternal disgrace on those who profited thereby, must convince us, at the same time, that they had succeeded in corrupting the people, who, if true to themselves, or grateful for past benefits, would not have looked calmly on during such scenes of persecution, murder, and robbery. These vast and splendid benefits have been faithfully chronicled by the author of this work in the following pages; and were one disposed to exaggerate their importance he should necessarily fail, for they comprise all that is most valuable to society—Religion, Arts, Literature, and Science. This charge of ingratitude, however, does not apply to Ireland, where the people and clergy of all Orders were sacrificed for their devotion to the Religion of their fathers; but rather to England, France, Spain, and some parts of Italy, where the most glorious services were requited with rapine, exile, death, and foulest defamation.

But of all the Orders that ever existed in the Church,

none has been so grossly calumniated as that of S. Dominic. Whilst the Jesuit and Franciscan Institutes have been described as corporations whose members were distinguished for all that is disgusting, the Dominicans have been invariably represented as communities of assassins, whose grand mission was to invent instruments of torture for the Inquisition, and to preside over revolting exhibitions in the piazzas of Italian and Spanish cities. A countless tribe of slanderous writers, in almost every tongue, from the days of Philip Van Lymborch, down to the fabricators in our times—to say nothing of the Moral Suicides who trade on the credulity of their dupes in public assemblages, and whose frantic ravings are pronounced in a language unintelligible to the majority of those who hear them—has never tired of making this Order the special object of vituperation. In fact, it is almost hopeless to think of obliterating the impressions made on the minds of the bigoted and unreflecting, by those chroniclers of facts which never existed outside their own imaginations—facts on which a dispassionate thinker should place the same reliance that he ought on the Mysteries of Udolpho, or similar figments. Happily, however, the Dominican Order has found an apologist of great power, in the person of Father Lacordaire; and no one can peruse his "Memorial to the French People,"[1] and refuse to acknowledge that he has lucidly and satisfactorily vindicated his Institute against all those abominable traducers. Henceforth, they shall be entitled to the same credence and respect that one should give to Mazzini and his Free Lances.

The history of the Dominicans should not be studied in the pages of men who have had an interest in blacken-

[1] Life of S. Dominic, by P. Lacordaire. Duffy, Dublin.

ing their characters, and misrepresenting them. Far otherwise, it should be read in the works which they have left to attest their piety and splendid genius. Distinguished in every department of literature, sacred and profane, they have produced some of the greatest men whom the world has ever seen. Dante[1] has apotheosized S. Dominic, and him of Aquino, so justly titled "Angel of the Schools." Touron is the faithful chronicler of the celebrated men of this Order, who shed lustre on Christianity by the sanctity of their lives, and the cultivation of these pursuits in which they have not been excelled by the Illuminati of our times. The following pages, too, must convince every unbiassed reader, that the very worst enemies to civilization and mental progress, are they who make the Religious Orders objects of ridicule and scorn. No matter how unjust the verdict pronounced on them by the malice and bigotry of the present times, the long array of celebrities recorded in these volumes will rise up to reverse it, and vindicate the Dominicans. Their witnesses shall be the hallowed and glorious temples that they raised to the honor of the Eternal—the marble, into which they almost breathed the breath of life—the storied windows—the canvas—and the frescos whereon they pourtrayed the images of the Saints, and the glories of that Angelic world to which we all aspire. The generations to whom their works were such a treasure and source of inspiration, will bitterly condemn an ungrateful posterity, who, instead of venerating their memories, have not ceased to treat them with indifference and scorn. Many evidences of that zeal with which they laboured to promote the happiness of society, spiritual as well as temporal, have

[1] Paradiso, Canto X. XI.

survived the wasting hand of time, and even now challenge the rivalry of modern genius. The graceful fountains "flinging freshness all about" in many of the Italian cities, the aquaducts, bridges, palaces, fortresses, and gates of bronze, not unworthy, perhaps, of praise similar to that which Michelangiolo bestowed on these

> "So marvellously wrought,
> That they might serve to be the gates of heaven,"

are so many monuments, recording their love of their fellow-man; and above all, of that dear, sunny land, with whose happiness and greatness they were long and so intimately identified.

It is quite unnecessary for me to dwell further on this subject; and, perhaps, it would be more desirable that I should plead, in extenuation of the inaccuracies that may be found in this version, the very limited time in which it was accomplished—to say nothing of occupations of a more serious and important character. A book such as this must do much to promote the cultivation of architecture and the decoration of our churches—subjects which have occupied the grave deliberations of the Prelates lately assembled in the Synod of Thurles. Its utility will be acknowledged by the Irish Ecclesiological Society, which counts so many distinguished members, and a president of such abilities as the Rev. Dr. Russell. The translator is justified in this expectancy, by the favourable opinion of a young and talented architect, to whom some of the proofs were read before going to press; and, indeed, Mr. M'Carthy's judgment, on such matters, is entitled to the highest respect, since no other man, in this country, has done so much for the revival of Christian Architecture.

I will not dismiss these pages without recording

my sincere and lasting regret for the sudden decease of the illustrious Prelate, under whose auspices they were commenced. My chiefest ambition was to place them in his hands, that I might thus testify my veneration for all the admirable qualities which adorned his sacred character, and endeared him to his clergy and flock. The numerous churches, convents, and schools, which he may be said to have created, will prove to after-times that his zeal for Christian Art was great and noble; and that he would have blessed any effort, however humble, that tended to promote it. Now that he lies awaiting the Resurrection, under the dome of his cathedral, and by the side of his predecessor, the Dominican Archbishop, I may appropriately adopt the words of the erudite and elegant Melchior Canus, of the same Institute, "Motus sum, tali Parente orbatus, qualis, ut arbitror apud mortales reliquus nullus est."

C. P. M.

SS. Michael and John,
Dublin, March 10th, 1852.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The history of the Fine Arts, considered under the influence of Christianity, may be divided into two grand epochs. The first, commencing in the sixth century, continued till the end of the twelfth; that is to say, throughout that long interval which has been termed the sleep of the human race: the second dates its origin at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and lasted till about one half of the sixteenth had passed away. During the first of these, it was the signal glory of Religion to have saved the Arts, together with sciences and letters, from utter destruction, and to have preserved the sacred primitive traditions, over whose development she watched with tenderest care. In the second epoch, she raised them to that excellence of form and conception which they attained and partly lost in the age of Leo X. At both periods she deserves our veneration for having elevated the Arts to the dignity of moral conceptions, and made them the teachers of the people. The Greeks and Romans employed Art to cater to the delectation of the senses; but Christianity, motived by holier sentiments, made it a medium for perfecting the heart and soul. Nor should we be understood as depreciating the importance of the Arts whether contemplated in the Roman catacombs, or under the empire of the Greeks in Constantinople. Neither do we mean to imply that their history, in ages subsequent to the sixteenth century, is not, in many respects, of great moment; but we confidently assert, that the influence of religion on the Arts, and the action of the Arts on the people, were at no time so marvellously or universally felt as in the two aforesaid epochs. Who is there that must not admire the sublime origin of Christian Art, whose earliest essays were made amidst the dreary gloom of the sepulchres where it wreathed its choicest garlands for the urns of the Martyrs, and like a holy hand-maid, followed Religion even when She was compassed by the instruments of death and torture? Who will not bless Art for having nerved the hearts of the Christian heroes, and transmitted their names and deeds to the latest posterity? Nevertheless, though born in holiness, Art for many a year was forced to shroud itself in mysterious and obscure symbols, as though its inspirations where unhallowed; nor would the circumstances of the times permit it to strengthen or develope its innermost life. Still more deplorable were the vicissitudes of the Arts among the Greeks in Constantinople, for, after a short-lived and ignoble existence, they were

ostracised by the ruthless fury of Leo the Isaurian and Constantine Copronimus, who obliged them to seek an asylum on the hospitable shores of Latium. A terrible history is that in which we find the cultivators of the Arts defending the Catholic dogma with their blood, and binding their brows with the Martyr's crown. Oh! how they learned to suffer in the gloomy depths of the catacombs. Oh! how intimate was the union between Art and Religion! This struggle against the Iconoclasts deserves to be studied and described far better than it has been, because it teems with great and piteous facts, and because that heresy was not only an attack on the Faith of Christendom but a war against civilization and the glory of nations. It was a desperate and accursed effort to rob man of all he holds most dear—a conspiracy to deprive him of the media by which he reveals to his fellow man his affections, joys, griefs, and hopes—an office which Art shares with poesy and eloquence.* Towards the decline of the sixteenth century and in the beginning of the following, when Italy lay prostrate and exhausted beneath foreign domination—when public decency was contaminated by the debaucheries of the courts—when the pernicious examples of the aristocratic classes had corrupted the masses—and when the Reformation had weakened the faith of the people, the Arts—far from being able to stay this direful ruin—suffered themselves to be carried away by the torrent on whose turbid waters the wrecks of society were floating, and lapsed into the most abominable obscenity. It was then that they abjured their high and holy function; it was then that they apostatized from their sacred calling that they might pander to the lusts of the voluptuary, and the laciviousness of their professors, thus covering our forefathers with shame, and perpetuating the history of our bondage and degradation.

But far different was it in the earlier Middle Ages, when the Arts had a sanctified and noble mission to perform. For when eloquence was mute, when philosophy was eclipsed, when the civil code was bloody and oppressive, when language itself was uncouth and dissonant, the Arts associated with Religion, undertook to civilize the ferocious races, and to form out of the fierce and various tribes of barbarians one great and concordant brotherhood. For this reason the artist may be called, the orator, poet, philosopher, and historian of the Mediæval period; and during that long interval in which we have no records, save of the sufferings of the oppressed, and the barbarity of their oppressors; in which we cannot behold virtue or learning triumphant outside the cloister, the Arts present themselves to us as the media of civilization and perfection, exercising the holy ministry confided to them, and consoling humanity in its long and terrible tribulations. This, however, is an epoch so little known and so shamefully calumniated in

* In the Conciliabulum held in Constantinople, by order of Constantine Copronimus, A.D., 754, the worship of images was pronounced to be a *diabolical invention;* and the art of painting was similarly anathematized. V. Concil, Tom. vii., p. 254.

the history of the Arts, that few will deign to study it; so much so, that those who write on the state of the Arts at this period, are wont to exhaust themselves in lamenting their decadence, and singing dirges over their grave, without ever reflecting that their remains were still palpitating, and that beneath these rude forms there was a vigorous and superabundant life, which was destined to reveal itself, after a little while, in the schools of Niccola of Pisa and of Giotto. The Painting and Sculpture of these ages, in all that regards mere *form*, are not calculated to console the studious of Art; nevertheless we are not to suppose that the miniatures and mosaics of the same periods lack merit even in this particular. But in all that relates to sacred architecture, we hold that they can bear comparison with the succeeding centuries; for if the classic eurythmy of the Greek and Roman edifices was best adapted to the fascinating and voluptuous religion of the Gentiles, the architecture improperly called Gothic, was unquestionably the fittest style for the Christian temple, since no other was so well calculated to sublimate the soul, or to inspire that profound recollection which the Catholic Ritual requires of its votaries. So thought Muratori, who has not hesitated to affirm, that though the moderns have introduced order and elegance into the construction of their fabrics, they are nevertheless excelled by the ancients in majesty and solidity.* Leon Battisa Alberti, who revived the architecture of Greece and Rome, was obliged to admit that Art, during the Middle Ages, had won its most signal triumphs in the Christian churches. Nay more, the origin of these edifices is intimately identified with the great civil and religious events of those periods; and the attentive observer will regard them not merely as masses of stone put together and arranged with greater or less order and proportion, but rather as so many adamantine pages whereon history has been written. Surely the *animus* of the Mediæval period is far more lucidly revealed in these monuments than in the rude chronicles and insipid lays of the Troubadours; for we must needs confess with Tommaseo, that Architecture is far *more expressive of public life*† than any other art can be. In fact, the very sight of it reminds us of the God's Truces, of the Crusades, of Feudalism, and of Chivalry, of the virtues, crimes, the few joys and the multiplied calamities of those times; nor can we cross the thresholds of these venerable piles without remembering how their vaults resounded for many a century with the psalmody and with the groans of our forefathers, who, during that tremendous struggle, came to the foot of the altar, begging of God to give them strength to suffer and to hope; since religion alone was their defence against the oppression of their tyrants, the sole guarantee of their rights, and their only consolation amidst the sorrows that surrounded them. At this period, the artist who undertook to erect a temple to the Most High, felt himself raised above all the conventionalities of

* De Artibus Italicorum post declinationem Rom., Imperii. Disert., xxiv., p. 350 Antiq., Ital., medii., ævi., v. 2.

† Nuovi Scritti d. N. Tommasseo, v. 2, p. 3, p. 317.

art, and thought of nothing save satisfying the civil and religious requirements of his time. In these ages of almost patriarchal simplicity, every species of luxury was studiously avoided in private life; but in all that appertained to the temple of God, both artists and people determined that it should be a monument of their genius, of their faith, and of the prosperity and riches of their country. Art having been thus ennobled, we are not to be surprised, if, on reading the history of those periods, we find it to have been professed by the Regular and Secular clergy, nay, and even by Bishops; nor are we to wonder at that sacred enthusiasm which so influenced the people in erecting edifices consecrated to the divine worship, that they vied with each other in honoring the Religion which was so intimately identified with their every-day-life, happiness and prosperity. We find a singular example of this devout enthusiasm recorded by the monk Aimone, who, when the Benedictines were erecting their church sacred to S. Peter in Dive, wrote to his brethren of the Abbey of Tutbury in England, thus: "It is truly an astonishing sight to behold men who boast of their high lineage and wealth yoking themselves to cars, drawing stones, lime, wood, and all the materials necessary for the construction of the sacred edifice. Sometimes a thousand persons, men and women, are yoked to the same car, so great is the burden; and yet the profoundest silence prevails. When they halt on the way, one hears nothing but the recital of their sins, of which they make public confession, accompanied with tears and prayers. Then the priests avail themselves of the opportunity to preach pardon of injuries, satisfaction of debts, &c., &c.; and should any one be so hardened as to withstand these pious exhortations, he is immediately expelled the holy brotherhood." (Ann. 861.)* But it often happened that Painting was productive of still grander results. We read, for example, that Bogori, king of the Bulgarians, in the ninth century, asked the monk Methodius for a picture, whereon the artist executed a painting of the Final Judgment, so tremendous and awful, that the barbarian prince, on hearing its signification explained by the holy solitary, immediately embraced Christianity, as did also all his subjects.† Arts which wrought such wondrous effects on the minds and hearts of nations, should not be treated superficially by historians, nor do we fear to assert that the latter generally have paid little heed to the results which the Arts were wont to produce. In fact, during these periods they supplied the place of eloquence and Philosophy, and tended as much to the weal of society as did either or both of the said sciences. Whoever would question this, can consult the ancient Chronicles, which must convince him that the great men who flourished in these days, employed both Painting and Sculpture to enlighten the illiterate populace, to whom the grand truths of

* Caumont, Histoire sommaire de l'architecture religieuse, militaire et civile au Moyen Age, ch. viii., p. 176.

† D' Agincourt Histoire de L'Art. v. 1. ch. xxviii., p. 26, in the note.

Religion and morality were thus made almost palpable.* Let us bear in mind, however, that no one may hope to produce a perfect history of the Arts during the Middle Ages, until he has deeply studied these wonderful Monastic Institutions which have rendered such glorious services to society. In fact, the Monks were not only the most learned of their times in science and letters, but they were also the most distinguished cultivators of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. After preaching the holy doctrines of peace and Christian charity to the fierce conquering hordes, and causing the Law of Christ to triumph over the barbarous tyranny of Feudalism, they proved themselves to be the Champions of the people and the Vindicators of their rights. Having accomplished this glorious task, they applied themselves sedulously to artistic pursuits, and we find them actively employed building bridges, embanking rivers, and constructing these magnificent cathedrals and abbeys, many of which still exist, recording to posterity their multiform genius and beneficence. We will not deny that Charlemagne, Theodolinda, and Theodoric, have strong claims on our gratitude for that zeal with which they laboured to preserve and promote the Arts; but we will fearlessly assert that neither their efforts, nor the laudable solicitude of many of the Roman Pontiffs, could have saved the Arts from inevitable ruin, if the Monks had not taken them under their fostering protection, and cultivated them lovingly for many an age. They preserved the sacred traditions entrusted to them by the Byzantines, and after having stamped them with that devotion and melancholy which they reveal, despite their graceless developments, transmitted them like a holy heritage to succeeding centuries. It would be almost superfluous to state, that this zeal and love, acted most beneficially on the barbarians, who as soon as they saw the Monks preserving, nay, and *practising* the Arts, began to respect and admire them, as though they were emanations of that Religion which had rehabilitated and humanized themselves. We have reason to regret that no one has as yet given us memoirs of the Benedictine artists, or snatched from oblivion those many great names which are worthy of eternal remembrance; but this is a service which we have a right to expect from the Monks themselves, who by a diligent examination of their archives—of that portion of them, at least, which has escaped the Vandalic demolition of latter times—could easily produce a history of the Arts during the Middle Ages, when they owed their salvation and advancement to the influence of monachism itself. Every one is aware that the monasteries of S. Gall in Switzerland, of Monte Casino in Italy, of Solognac near Limoges, (in

* V. the 105th Epistle of S. Gregory the great, in which we read these words: "wherefore let pictures be employed in the churches, that those who do not understand letters may be able at least to read on the walls what they are not able to read in books." In the statutes enacted by the Sienese Painters (A.D., 1355,) we read "We, by the Grace of God, manifest to rude and ignorant men the miraculous events operated by virtue of and in confirmation of our Holy Faith."—*Gaye, Carteggio Inedito. Archivio delle Riformagioni, etc. V.* 1.

France,) of Douay in Flanders, not to mention others, were so many flourishing schools in which the Arts were cultivated by the Recluses. Nay more, the very earliest elementary treatise on Goldsmith's work and Italian painting, was written by the monk Theophilus in the twelfth century; and in the days of the Revival, the Camaldulese Monks were the most successful cultivators of Painting, the Olivetans of Tarsia, (or of wood-inlaying,) whilst those of Monte Casino were far famed for their Miniatures and Paintings on glass. This alone ought to be sufficient to prove that the monks of old burned with holy zeal to provide for the moral and intellectual requirements of society.

Reverting to the second epoch, which is termed the Revival, we find that the influence which Religion exercised on art, nay, and on Society, transcends all our imaginings. The movement which originated in the twelfth century foreshadowed the results which it was destined to produce in after times, for when the Crusades and Chivalry had humanized the peoples' hearts, and improved their social condition, every one was seized with a generous resolve to ameliorate his status; and it would appear that men began to be ashamed of ignorance, and intolerant of the degrading serfdom beneath which they had groaned for so many ages. It was then that they began to reunite all these social bonds which feudal egotism had not only relaxed, but shattered, sacrificing the rights and happiness of an entire people to the passions of iniquitous oligarchs. Banding themselves together in municipalities, and subsequently in commercial, civil, and religious confederations, and applying themselves at the same time to the study of Roman jurisprudence, they wisely emancipated themselves from those Lombard laws which allowed might to triumph over right. The two Universities of Bologna and Paris fed the lamp of knowledge; and the Arts, following the general movement, elevated themselves to greater dignity of development and conception. Poesy lisped with the Troubadours, but they were sent to prepare the way for the great Alighieri; and Painting, associating itself with the Bards, did not give Giotto to the world till Dante had begun to sing the three kingdoms of the Second Life. Wondrous, indeed, must this movement in favour of Arts and Sciences appear if we reflect on the turbulent character of that period. Though the Italians were threatened with bondage by the house of Swabia—though they were distracted and split into factions by internecine feuds, nevertheless they never for a moment renounced those resolves and hopes which, far from being dismayed or weakened, seemed to gather strength and *boldness* from that tremendous conflict. The same may be asserted of the Roman Pontiffs who were a great element in the revival of arts and sciences, at that precise period when the struggle with the Germanic Empire was fiercest—the struggle in which the Roman Church triumphed over these disasters which enslaved and ruined her rival on the shores of the Bosphorus. Every honest heart must throb with gratitude when recalling the names of Gregory VII., Alexander III. and those of the two Innocents (III. and IV.); for had success

attended the iniquitous machinations of their enemies, our glory must have perished, the advancement of science, arts and letters must have been retarded, and we ourselves, in all probability must have lapsed like the Greeks into barbarism. To appreciate fully the influence which Religion exercised on Art in this second epoch, we need but contemplate the sacred monuments raised in this age, for they are far more eloquent than the historian's pen, and in their number as well as beauty surpass all those that have been erected before or since. The eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed the erection of S. Marco in Venice, and of the Cathedral of Pisa. At this period, too, a goodly portion of the Cathedral of Siena was raised, and Monte Cassino was partly rebuilt; but the thirteenth century beheld the construction of more numerous edifices, not only in Italy, but in France, Germany, England and Belgium.* And this all-pervading enthusiasm for Art, and this cultivation of Art for the sake of religion, created, and sooth to say, multiplied the number of artists. Then appeared that marvellous genius, Niccola of Pisa, whom Italian sculpture canonizes as her saviour; and who perpetuated in his disciples, Giovanni Pisano and Arnolfo, that most splendid school so fruitful of illustrious artists, that was destined to derive fresh lustre from such men as Donatello, Ghiberti, and Michelangiolo Buonarroti. Arnolfo was the precursor of Brunellesco and Leon Battista Alberti; and Cimabue was the instructor of that Giotto who founded one of the grandest schools recorded in his country's history. Never since that moment when Christian Art, unnoticed and *timorous*, traced its first etchings on the walls of the catacombs, and the first symbols of its Faith on the Martyr's urns, never since that period, whose annals are written in blood, did it behold such glorious days as these. Twelve centuries had passed away ere Giotto came; and never till then had Christian Art been hailed with such devotion of heart and soul; for it was then that it began to develop all its potency and fecundity, giving the universe to know that it possessed types of beauty which should rival the productions of Greece and Rome, and excel the ancients by the sublimity of these holy sentiments which were transfused from heaven into the intellects of its cultivators.

Speaking of the first epoch, we have observed that the Arts during the earlier periods of the Middle ages had found a sanctuary and an asylum in the cloisters, and that the Monks were their greatest and most enthusiastic devotees; nor shall the oblivion of their names nor the destructive

* We may here mention some of the buildings belonging to this period. In Italy:—the basilica of S. Francesco di Assisi, A.D. 1228, the duomo of Florence, 1298—that of Orvietto, 1290—S. Antonio di Padova, 1231—the Campo Santo di Pisa, 1278—S. Maria Novella in Florence, 1279. S. Croce was built in 1294, and to this period belong SS. Giovanni e Paolo, and the church of the Frari in Venice. Outside Italy:—the cathedrals of Cologne, of Beauvais, of Chartres, Reims, Amiens, Brussels, York, Salisbury, Westminster, Burgos, Toledo, etc. etc., all belong to the first half of the thirteenth century.

hand of time gainsay this fact. The same may be asserted of the Religious Orders founded in the thirteenth century, for although only then in their infancy, they gave a vigorous impulse to the progressive social movement which was almost contemporaneous with them. Whosoever has studied the genius and nature of that age, must have perceived how intimately the Orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans are identified with its progression, and must have seen at a glance that they were an emanation of the religious enthusiasm which then pervaded the world. Hence, their indefatigable and undying zeal in preaching peace and calming these ferocious passions which had reddened the piazzas and fields of Italy with blood. When it became necessary to espouse one of the two factions—the Guelph or the Ghibelline—the Religious Orders did not withhold their fealty from the Pontiff, or prove themselves traitors to the independence of Italy, but preserved their allegiance inviolable to the one and the other, despite the persecutions of the Emperor Frederic the Second, of Ezzelino da Romano,* and of Ludovic, the Bavarian. When the chivalry of Europe was marching to Palestine, they, too, marched in the vanguard of the Crusaders; and when the Ultramontanes† disseminated the baleful tares of the Manichean Heresy (whose tenets were destructive of religion, arts, and civilization,) on our fair soil, they laboured with all their energy to uproot the seeds that must have germinated a crop of malediction. Need we say, when time required a diffusion of light, and the souls of men were athirst for knowledge, that they produced S. Thomas of Aquino, Albertus Magnus, Bacon, and S. Bonaventura? In a word, when early monachism—born amid the tears and tribulations of the people during the barbaric invasions, and designed by God to mitigate the bitterness of these calamities and to prepare society for its future destinies—had lost its moral power, then came the Orders of the thirteenth century; and as they originated at the precise moment when the progressive movement was most impetuous, and society was about to reconstruct itself on newer and more solid bases, they, too, were constrained to take a part in that tremendous struggle of right against might. The grandest service however which they rendered to humanity was that of banding the discordant classes together, and making themselves a centre of union between the people and the nobility. As to their love and protection of the Arts, we need only contemplate the monuments they have left; nor can Italy deny that she is indebted to them for these splendid works which must crown her with glory for evermore. Whosoever would appreciate the paintings of the early periods must visit the splendid basilica of S. Francesco in Assisi, for the decoration of which the Franciscans employed

* For a vivid portraiture of this man, who called himself the "Enemy of God," see Miley's learned History of the Papal States, vol. 3, page 236.

† The meaning of this designation will be understood when it is remembered that Father Marchese wrote his work in Florence.

the pencils of the Greeks, and of Giunta, Cimabue, Giotto, Pietro Cavallini, Giottino, Buffalmacco, Filippo and Simone Memmi, Puccio Capanna, and of all the great men of the time. Whosoever would contemplate all the glories of the chisel expended on one monument, has only to visit the sepulchral urn which enshrines the bones of S. Dominic in Bologna; for the ornamentation of which the Preaching Friars engaged Niccola Pisano, Fra Guglielmo, Niccola di Bari, the pupil of Jacopo della Fonte, Alfonso Lombardi, Gerolamo Coltellini, and Michelangiolo Buonarroti. Whosoever would behold all the arts of design unfolding all their diversified beauties must make a pilgrimage to the temple of S. Antonio in Padua, to S. Croce and Santa Maria Novella in Florence, to the Frari and SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, and to the other churches in Italy and elsewhere. Those who are familiar with the rigid poverty enjoined by the austere laws of these Orders will marvel, no doubt, at the splendour in which they arrayed their temples, but let it be borne in mind that the Friars of those days set no value on the things of earth, save when they could employ them for the embellishment of God's consecrated dwelling. Innocent ambition which could produce so many and such glorious monuments! But they were not satisfied with being merely protectors and patrons of the arts, they cultivated them themselves, and in all the departments of design they contended for mastery with the most celebrated artists of their times. When the Byzantines were "lording it over Mosaic's field," Fra Mino da Turrita, the Franciscan, had already gained celebrity in that art as early as the first half of the thirteenth century. The architects of S. Maria Novella of the Preaching Friars, emulated Arnolfo—Fra Filippo Lippi, a Carmelite, walked with a master's step in the footprints of Masaccio; and the Blessed Giovanni Angelico, and Fra Bartolommeo (both Dominicans) were amongst the foremost of those whom Italian painting has apotheosized. Montorsoli, of the Order of Servites, won the love and esteem of Michelangiolo Buonarroti, who would fain have him as his assistant when sculpturing the tomb of Julius the Second in Rome, and those of the Medici in Florence. Fra Giocondo was so famed for his architecture and literary accomplishments that he has none to compete with him save Leon Battista Alberti. I will not mention the elect and numerous band of artists belonging to the other Orders, for there is not a single one of them that cannot boast of many;* but it would be ingratitude not to notice the signal services rendered to the Arts by two religious orders long since extinct, the Gesuati and Umiliati, whose constitutions bound them to industrial pursuits, such as pharmacy weaving cloth, etc. They also cultivated architecture, civil, religious, and military, and we very frequently find them employed as public engineers by

* Whoever desires to peruse the series of the principal artists belonging to the other Religious Orders may consult a long note given by Bottari at the end of Vasari's life of Fra Giovanni Angelico. See the Livornese and Florentine editions of 1771. In the course of these volumes we will have occasion to speak of others.

the Florentine Republic and other cities of Tuscany. Nor should it be forgotten that they excelled as painters on glass.* Thus did the Religious Orders realize, as early as the fourteenth century, one of the cherished ideas of Carlo Denina,† who would have them employed not only in the study of sacred and profane sciences, but also in the cultivation of the Fine Arts and mechanics. Two religious communities effected all this in the fourteenth century; and an age so industrial as ours will, doubtless, appreciate this fact more than many others which we could enumerate.

It would be in our power to heighten these encomiums which we have been bestowing on the religious Orders for their devotion to the arts, had we space to insert the series of the men who have written on Art, and developed its grand principles. The foremost names in that category should be those of Fathers Pacioli, Giocondo, Ignazio Danti, Della Valle, Affò, Federici, Lanzi, and Pungileoni; and thus would a beauteous page be added to the annals of the religious societies—an important page truly—without which their history must be incomplete.

From all that we have said, every one may easily perceive what a grand and noble mission is reserved for the man, who, motived by the love of Religion and of Art, will undertake to narrate the great services which Catholicism has conferred on Art during the two foresaid epochs. Nor would it be difficult to demonstrate that Christian Art was at all times under the special protection and influence of monachism. In fact, it had scarcely emerged from the Roman Catacombs after the Imperial persecutions, when the Solitaries of the East gave it an asylum, and defended it with their blood against the Iconoclasts, cultivating it fondly and ardently, if not exclusively. Its destinies were then confided to the monks of the West, at the time when the barbarians were invading the Roman Empire; till at length the Mendicant Orders of the thirteenth century received it in its infancy and reared it to maturity by a two-fold action—protection and cultivation. What a blessing to Religion and society, if the Friars of the various Orders would only search their archives and publish memoirs of the various artists who shed lustre on our common country! Expecting to see this work accomplished sooner or later, we have laboured to compose this artistic history of the Preaching Friars, humbly hoping that it may be productive of some utility. And in truth, no other Order has reared a grander or more numerous body of painters, architects, painters of glass, intarsiatori, and miniaturists. In the pages of this work we shall find these Dominicans educating

* Gaye (Carteggio Inedito e Archivio delle Riformagioni, etc. v. 1 Appen.) gives us a memorial presented by these two Orders to the Florentine Republic, which commences thus "Whereas these two Orders (the Gesuati and Umiliati) heretofore and at present have been of service to the Republic and Florentine people in all matters pertaining to said commune, and whereas they possess an establishment for weaving of cloth, etc."

† Rivoluz. d'Italia, lib. xii. cap. vi. e lib. xxiv. cap. v.

Raffaello da Urbino and Bramante Lazzari in the pictorial Art—we shall see them working in the Cathedrals of Pisa, Orvieto, Milan, in S. Petronio at Bologna, and in S. Peter's at Rome. We shall find them erecting bridges over the Arno, the Seine, and the Minho; superintending the most gigantic operations in hydraulics, and distinguishing themselves as military engineers, in the principal cities and fortresses of Italy. Nor will we omit that most brilliant episode in Italian history, which tells how, they toiled to rehabilitate Art, when the profligacy of the times had seduced and degraded it. Need we say that the life and tragic death of SAVONAROLA must be an everlasting attestation of this fact? No one can doubt for a moment that they excelled all other artists in sacred painting, for they not only surpassed all competitors in their knowledge of its innermost nature, but regarded it as a holy profession, so that with few exceptions, all the artists of this Order were famed for the sanctity of their lives. It is true, that Vasari and Baldinucci have given us notices of the most distinguished of these men; but their memoirs are in many instances incomplete, and need many corrections and additions. Nor should we forget that they have suppressed many a glorious name which deserves to be chronicled in the memory of mankind. We flatter ourselves with the hope of having done some service; and, indeed, it involved no inconsiderable labour, to shape a unique narrative, comprising our most eminent Artists, out of the discordant and often conflicting statements of Art-Historians. However, a diligent investigation of public and private archives, has resulted in the discovery of numerous valuable documents, hitherto unpublished, which are calculated to diffuse stronger light on the history of Art. For example, the life of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, that most illustrious painter, is enriched with many facts of the greatest importance. The life of Fra Benedetto del Mugello, (Fra Giovanni, Angelico's brother,) the miniaturist, is entirely new; as is also that of Fra Domenico Portigiani the sculptor, and pupil of Gian Bologna. The life of Fra Guglielmo of Pisa, omitted by Vasari and Baldinucci, and superficially treated by Alessandro Morrona, will be found in the pages of this work, copiously illustrated with many valuable notices which have been recently brought to light. To the very meagre details given by Count Tassi, regarding the life of Fra Damiano da Bergamo, the most distinguished of the Italian Intarsiatori we will add much that has not been published heretofore. The same may be said of the Blessed James of Ulm, and of many others. But to the life of one in particular, we have devoted all the energies we possess, sparing no research or labour, that we might do justice to the subject and satisfy the expectations of his numerous admirers. Hitherto the life of the Blessed Giovanni Angelico, has not been written with that accuracy and copiousness which alone can rescue it from the arbitrary conjectures of modern historians; and if our researches in public and private archives for notices of the life of this eminent and holy painter, have not

been always crowned with success, we can congratulate ourselves, at least on having made additions to the memoirs written of him by his two Tuscan biographers, and thus, in great part, satisfied the anxiety of those who take deep interest in his history. As we have undertaken to write only *of the most eminent artists* of the Order, we would hope that we shall not be censured for having omitted many of those who are celebrated in Italy and beyond the Alps; and as the *most eminent* of them were Tuscans, we are convinced that our biography will not be found in any particular meagre. We frankly confess, however, that this first attempt to write the Artistic History of the Preaching-Friars, is not without its imperfections; but we pray our readers to remember the many difficulties which must be encountered by those who undertake to investigate *and arrange the annals* and memoirs of early periods, and the liability to err, which such investigation almost invariably involves. Nobody has preceded us in this labour; and should we be fortunate enough to light on other documents calculated to illustrate what is here collected, we shall not fail to give a supplementary volume.*

These Memoirs, therefore, are not to be considered as a history, but rather as the result of our researches, and as material for a still more perfect work. As it was not our province to treat of the Æsthetics of Art, or to pronounce criticisms on the productions of our artists, we have cautiously avoided these extremes into which the opinions of writers on that subject are wont to lead, contenting ourselves with occasional comments on the genius and works of our distinguished confreres. Each one forms his own judgment of the excellence or imperfections of objects of Art, nor should we be deemed unreasonable for differing with many as to the correctness of their conclusions. In fact, of all debatable subjects, there is not a single one on which men are so likely to differ as on that of Art. It has been our grand object to render some service to Religion as well as to the Arts; and to rekindle in the hearts of our Friars, the love of those pursuits which their predecessors cultivated with such noble zeal. In extenuation of the shortcomings which must necessarily characterize these Memoirs, we can only say that if youth, good intention, and indefatigable labour, deserve sympathy, we are certain that it will not be denied to us.

* Bottari, in a letter addressed to Mariette which may be read in V. volume of "Delle Pittoriche," says, "It would seem as tho' all writers on Art have some malediction over them, for they invariably fall into incredible errors. I myself am an instance of this, for I have made blunders in matters which I knew as well as my own name.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Page

State of the Arts in Italy at the commencement of the Thirteenth Century, and particularly of Architecture, commonly termed Gothic or Teutonic, ... 1

CHAPTER II.

Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, Tuscan architects—Their first works for the Florentine Republic—They finish the Palace del Podesta—They rebuild the Carraja Bridge—They build the Church of S. Maria Novella—They are called to Rome by Pope Nicholas III. to work in the Vatican, ... 9

CHAPTER III.

Minor Tuscan Architects, their Works in Prato, Florence, and in Val d' Arno, etc. 30

CHAPTER IV.

Of some Portuguese Architects of the Thirteenth Century, . 36

CHAPTER V.

Notice of the Life and Works of Fra Guglielmo da Pisa, Sculptor and Architect—State of Sculpture in Italy, at the beginning of the Thirteenth Century—The first Works of Fra Guglielmo, in his own country and in Bologna, ... 39

CHAPTER VI.

Page
Description of the Arca or shrine of S. Dominic at Bologna—What part Niccola Pisano and Fra Guglielmo had in its execution—The Sculptors who at various periods were engaged at it, . 1

CHAPTER VII.

Continuation of the Life of Fra Guglielmo da Pisa—His works in the Duomo of Orvieto, and in his own country—His Death, . 60

CHAPTER VIII.

Bolognese and Lombard Architects—Their buildings in Venice, in Padua, in Trevigi, in Milan, ... 7

CHAPTER IX.

Notices of Fra Giovanni da Campi, and Fra Jacopo Talenti, Tuscan architects—They finish the Church of S. Maria Novella—They build the new Convent—They re-build the Carraja Bridge, and raise other edifices for the Republic and private citizens, . 8

CHAPTER X.

Fra Giovannino da Marcojano, and other religious Architects of the Convent of S. Maria Novella, pupils of Fra Giovanni da Campi and Fra Jacopo Talenti, ... 10

CHAPTER XI.

Dominican Miniaturists of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries in S. Maria Novella, S. Marco in Florence, and S. Catherine at Pisa, 11

CHAPTER XII.

Notices of the Life and Works of Fra Benedetto del Mugello, Miniaturist and Painter, ... 1

CHAPTER XIII.

Fra Eustachio, and Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano, Tuscan Miniaturists of the Sixteenth Century, ... 14

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

Page
Fra Angelico, ... 150

CHAPTER II.

Published and unpublished Documents, from which the present Life of Fra Giovanni Angelico has been compiled, . . 160

CHAPTER III.

The Origin, Country, Studies, and Religious Profession of Fra Giovanni Angelico, ... 164

CHAPTER IV.

The first Works of the Angelico in Foligno and Cortona, . . 175

CHAPTER V.

Fra Giovanni returns to Fiesole, ... 186

CHAPTER VI.

Fra Giovanni and Fra Benedetto go to Florence—The building of the new Convent of S. Mark—Paintings by the Angelico for the Church and Convent of his Order, and for the city of Florence, 200

CHAPTER VII.

Paintings by Fra Angelico for the other Churches of Florence, . 227

CHAPTER VIII.

The Angelico is invited to paint in Rome, probably by Pope Eugene IV. and is detained there by his successor, Nicholas V.—His Paintings in the Vatican, the Minerva, and in Orvieto—His Death, Eulogy, and Disciples, ... 240

Page

Summary of the Paintings now existing by Fra Giovanni Angelico, 262

CHAPTER IX.

Notices of Fra Bartolomeo Coradini of Urbino, commonly called Fra Carnovale, ... 265

CHAPTER X.

Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, the Veronese Painter, . . 272

CHAPTER XI.

Father Domenico Emanuele Maccarj, the Genoese Painter. . 279

CHAPTER XII.

Fra Francesco Colonna, the Venetian Architect, author of the Art-Romance, entitled The Dream of Polifilo, . . . 282

CHAPTER XIII.

Of some Tuscan Painters, and Fra Bartolomeo Perugino, . 295

CHAPTER XIV.

Notices of the Blessed James of Ulm and of his Disciples in Glass-Painting, ... 307

CHAPTER XV.

Reformation of Italian Art attempted by Fra Gerolamo Savonarola—His Ideas on the Subject—The Men who aided him in this attempt, ... 316

MEMOIRS

OF THE MOST

Eminent Painters, Sculptors & Architects,

OF THE

ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

State of the Arts in Italy at the commencement of the Thirteenth Century, and particularly of Architecture, commonly termed Gothic or Teutonic.

In the second decade of the thirteenth century, when the Preaching-Friars came to perform the duties of their religious and civil apostolate, the Fine Arts had begun to emerge from the obscurity of the barbaric times into the light of a new era, and were approaching their perfection, with the same rapidity that had marked their decline. This, however, cannot be asserted of every branch of art at this precise period, since painting and mosaic were, for a long time, retarded by the teachings and productions of the Byzantines; so much so, that the advancement of both was slow and inglorious in the days of Giunta, Margaritone of Arezzo, Guido of Siena, and Andrea Tafi; whilst the progress of sculpture, in the schools of Niccola Pisano andhis disciples, may be described as rapid and gigantic.

Singularly capricious, however, yet not without glory, was the progress of architecture. The causes of that decline as well as of this happy return to their primitive excellence, have been narrated by writers on the arts, with more or less accuracy; and we deem it our duty to expend a few words on the subject of architecture; since the Dominicans applied themselves most zealously to its study and cultivation, in the two first centuries of their institution. The necessity of erecting churches and convents for themselves was well calculated to educate them in an art as delightful as it was useful; and, indeed, so great was their proficiency, that Cicognara has not hesitated to assert, that they were the only men who influenced the glorious genius of Niccola Pisano, or successfully competed with him in this department.[1]

Those who have made a study of the incipient decay into which architecture—the first-born of the arts—had fallen, are wont to trace it to the times of Diocletian, and Constantine; and to discover the signs of its debasement in the baths of the one, as well as in the triumphal arch of the other, which may be still seen at Rome, not to speak of Diocletian's palace at Spalatro, in Dalmatia.[2] In these

[1] Cicognara Storia della Scultura Italiana. Vol. 3, l. iii., c. 6, p. 366.

[2] The palace of Spalatro, was erected in the third century, and bears all the marks of the bad taste which then had begun to prevail. In this edifice pillars are made to support arches instead of architraves, whilst arcades destroy the entablature. The baths of Diocletian, at Rome, are evidences of still greater deterioration, and licentiousness. Columns uselessly built into the walls, and raised one above the other, resting on tasteless pedestals, surmounted by architraves and broken cornices, are some of the marks wherein may be recognised that decay of architecture, which was perpetuated during the reign of Constantine, and his successors. What wonder, then, if the wars which devastated the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, involved arts and sciences in one common ruin?—V. D'Agincourt, and the excellent work entitled, "Archeologie Chretienne," par J. Oudin, Cure de Bourron. Bruxelles, 1847.

edifices the eye immediately recognises a licentious departure from the laws which the great masters had laid down, as it were to overrule the caprices of innovators. These signs of debasement were, if possible, still more distinguishable in Byzantium, where the absence of the grand models with which Rome and the cities of Greece abounded, might have made men despair of ever reviving classic elegance; since all laws had been sacrificed to a vitiated taste for ornamentation. Indeed, the manners of a people are so intimately connected with their arts, that their grandeur or abjectness may be learned from the monuments which bear the impress of their conceptions. At a subsequent period, when the northern hordes swept like a torrent over Europe, far from introducing a new style of architecture—for, indeed, they knew nothing of science or letters—they retained the ROMAN; but, setting no value on any characteristic, save solidity, they despoiled it of all ornament and grace. In an age of rapine and conflagration, when fierce masses, thirsting for blood and gold, were in constant conflict, the grand object was to seek protection for life and property; at that period private domiciles, nay, and even the consecrated temples of God, presented all the appearances of fortresses. It was then that the barbarians began to erect these massive castles where they stored their prey, and the numberless towers, many of which are still standing in our cities. This, then, is the first epoch of that style, by some most improperly termed Gothic, (for it had begun to be used at a period anterior to the irruption of the Goths,) and by others, Romano-Byzantine; but which ought to be designated as Romano-barbaric, though in some of the Italian provinces it has been called "Lombard." Its principle characteristics are nudity, the total absence of proportion, and immense massiveness. The

ancient churches of S. Michele, in Pavia, and S. Fre diano, in Lucca, may be regarded as examples of thi style. This form of architecture was adopted during th eleventh century; but at the commencement of the twelft an improvement was introduced. For this we are indebte to the crusades, to our intercourse with the East, and t the invasion of the Saracens, who, having occupie nearly the whole of Spain, and burst into Italy an France, bequeathed much of their ornamental tastes, nay and of their mannerism, to the peoples whom they ha either conquered or expelled from their homesteads. T say nothing of their Arabesques, and Damaskeening their architecture was closely imitated, as is clearly prove by the palace of Ziza, and the church of Monreale, i Sicily; and were confirmation of this needed, we hav but to point to the church of S. Mark, at Venic Strange as it may appear, it is not the less certai that whilst the Italians were plunged in ignorance an barbarism, the Spanish Arabs were engaged in rearin such graceful monuments as the Alhambra, the Alc zar, and the Mosque (now the cathedral) of Cordov neither do we deem this the place to speak of their em nence in science and literature.[1] Nevertheless, whilst arch tecture, in some parts of Italy, was copied after the prevai ing fashion of the East, and was every day adopting strang and whimsical developments, a new, and far more desirab change was manifesting itself in other regions of the peni sula. As soon as the barbarians had ceased to invade, a when the different races, grown tired of blood and havoc, ha

1 "Grenada (says an Arabic author, quoted by Romey, Hist. D'E pagne. T. viii., p. 194,) was so splendid in works of Arabic art, that resembled 'a silver cup, filled with hyacinths and emeralds.'" See also interesting chapter on the literature and arts of the Spanish Arabs in Pr cott's "Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella." Vol. 1.

begun to amalgamate, the interval of peace that followed witnessed the erection of many sacred edifices of considerable beauty, in Tuscany. These edifices generally were constructed out of the debris of the ancient Roman monuments, which still remained in abundance to attest the glory of the past, and the terrible calamities that had fallen on the earth. These relics of civilisation were then piled one upon another, without order or proportion. Even so, such beauteous remains of cultivated genius might have stimulated the rude builders to study and copy the works of the ancients, had not circumstances, for which we cannot account, exercised a deplorable influence over them. It must be admitted, however, that Rome, Florence, Pisa, and other cities, which abounded with monuments of the classical times, made a better use of them; and even now, after the lapse of so many centuries, the cathedral of Pisa presents a vast quantity of capitals, columns, bases, and inscriptions taken from the Roman edifices of the purer ages. No one can inspect the baptistery and campanile at Pisa, without feeling astonishment at this singular aggregate. The same may be remarked of S. Pietro, at Grado, near Pavia, of S. Giovanni and S. Miniato, al Monte, and of the Duomo, at Fiesole. Thus did Italy pass to the second period of Gothic architecture, which of all its modifications, seems to have the strongest claim on our admiration, for the arrangement of its details. But its duration was short, for it did not outlive the twelfth century, and was exclusively confined to these places in which the remains of the Roman buildings were numerous.

Meanwhile, in this twelfth century,[1] and at the dawn

[1] "Au douzieme siecle," writes M. Amperes, (Hist. litt. de la France) "tout nait, tout resplendit à la fois dans le monde moderne; chevalerie

of that immediately following, a wondrous change was witnessed in civil and religious architecture—a change that totally altered its form and aspect, and seemed to herald the still more wondrous revolution that was taking place in society.

The arches, which up to this period were semicircular, became diagonal, or to speak more intelligibly, pointed: columns and pilasters were succeeded by clustered columns, or pilasters adorned with demi-columns; while the Doric and Corinthian capitals, which had been so happily employed in the preceding century, made way for arabesques and most bizarre figures. The very roofs began to be considerably elevated, and arches springing out of arches, and gracefully intersecting each other, were raised to a height hitherto unprecedented. It would appear that the builders had resolved to conquer what seemed an insuperable difficulty; for they united perfect solidity to that majestic altitude whose graceful lightness fills the eyes of the spectator with astonishment and delight.[1] Nor should we be understood as implying that the pointed style did not appear before this period. On the contrary, for D'Agincourt asserts that he has found some examples of it in Italy, in the buildings of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries. Nevertheless it was very rarely used, and was invariably alternated by the semicircular, as may be seen in the monasteries of S. Benedict and S. Scolastica, at Subbiaco. Now it appears to us that this third epoch of the Gothic style

croisades, architecture, langues, litterature, nouvelles: c'est là que debute veritablement l'histoire de nos arts, de notre litterature, de notre civilisation: c'est au douzieme siecle que se termine la transformation du monde ancien imperial, romain, paien, qui devient le monde nouveau, feodal e Chretien."

[1] V. D'Agincourt, l'Histoire de l'Art, and the eloquent pages of Montalembert, on the origin of Gothic or Teutonic architecture, in the Introduction to the Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

should be divided into two periods of time. The first, which lasted throughout the thirteenth century, is the most simple, and best proportioned. The second is that of the fourteenth century; and it is the richest and the most ornate of all the styles presented to us in the architecture of the earlier ages. The façades of the duomi of Orvieto and Siena clearly belong to this style, as does also the façade of the cathedral at Milan, which is the latest exemplification that Italy exhibits of the Gothic in all its splendour, richness, and majesty. Beyond the Alps the existence of Gothic architecture was destined to be of much longer duration; but with us it ceased about the middle of the fifteenth century, when Leon Battista Alberti and Brunellesco revived the orders of Greece and Rome. Withal, though the last period of the Teutonic style yields to the first in harmony of proportions and severe majesty, it cannot be said to have conferred many advantages on all the arts, since the love of lavishing every species of decoration, especially on the façades of the basilicas, obliged artists to pay special attention to the study of design, thus contributing to the progress of painting and sculpture. These decorations which they expended in such profusion on the exteriors of the sacred edifices in the earlier periods, consisted of fruits, flowers, animals, mysterious symbols, and, not rarely, of figures in relievo and mezzo-relievo: till, at length, many façades, like that of the duomo of Orvieto, had their whole superficies covered with histories from the Old and New Testament. Many of these façades presented the sculptured effigies of the holy protectors of the city, of the benefactors of the church, of the architects who had designed them; and the duomo of Siena was decorated with the armorial bearings of all the cities federated with that illustrious republic. Thus did one

single edifice chronicle, as it were, the civil, religious, and artistic glories of a people, their history, genius, and faith. Mosaic, inlaid wood, (la tarsia,) stained glass, bronze, and plaster, were copiously employed to decorate the sacred precincts; and this will account for the fact that the ablest architects of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as Niccola and Giovanni of Pisa, Agostino and Agnolo of Siena, were also distinguished sculptors; nay, we sometimes find them both architects and painters, as in the person of Taddeo Gaddi; whilst others, such as Orgagna, were perfect masters of each of the three sister-arts.[1]

But when the Franciscan and Dominican orders were founded in Italy, architecture underwent that change which we have indicated in the first period of the third epoch; that is to say, when the imitation of the antique was abandoned for the cultivation of the Gothic, or, as it is more commonly termed, the Teutonic style.[2]

[1] V. their Lives in Vasari, Bohn's Series, vol. i.

[2] The reader will understand that this partition of the Gothic style does not pretend to rigid exactness, since architecture, more than any of the other arts, is subject to modifications. Hence, what is here said of Italy does not apply to France or Germany. As proof of this, we give the scale of the Abbè Bourassè, (Archeol. Chret. c. v. p. 72,) which agrees with Caumont's, and differs from D'Agincourt's—the two first having written especially for France, and the second for Italy.

Architecture of the Middle Ages.	Roman-Byzantin.	Primitive, from 400 to 1000.
		Secondary, from 1000 to 1100.
		Third, or transition, from 1100 to 1200.
	Pointed,	Lancet, from 1200 to 1300.
		Decorated, from 1300 to 1400.
		Perpendicular, from 1400 to 1550.
		Renaissance in middle of 16th century.

Let it be borne in mind, also, that Orgagna employed the pointed arch in Florence as early as 1370, or thereabouts.

CHAPTER II.

Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, Tuscan architects—Their first works for the Florentine Republic—They finish the Palace del Podesta—They rebuild the Carraja Bridge—They build the Church of S. Maria Novella—They are called to Rome by Pope Nicholas III., to work in the Vatican.

THE first cultivators of the arts whom the history of the Preaching-Friars presents to us, are two distinguished architects, greater than whom, if we except Niccola Pisano and Arnolfo, were not beheld in their times. Justly indeed has public gratitude classified these two celebrated men with those who were conspicuous in the restoration of Italian architecture. These men were called Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, lay-brothers of the convent of S. Maria Novella.

Fra Sisto was born in Florence, in that quarter of the city that bears his name, near the gate of S. Pancrazio. Fra Ristoro was a native of Campi, a considerable hamlet, seven miles from Florence and four from Prato. The valuable, yet meagre, notices that have been preserved of them (and indeed they amount to a few lines in the Necrology of the foresaid convent,) do not furnish us with the names of their parents or the year of their birth.[1] Nevertheless it would appear that they were born between 1220 and 1225, that is to say, fifteen or

[1] Necrol. Ven. Conv. S. Mariæ Novellæ de Flor. ord Praedic. ab ann. 1225. This Necrology was commenced by F. Pietro Macci, who continued it to 1280, and probably to 1301, the year of his death. This interesting record was partly published by F. Fineschi, (Florence, 1780,) in a work entitled "Memorie istoriche per servire alle vite degli uomini illustri del Conv. di S. Maria Novella."

twenty years before Cimabue. Neither have we been able to discover from whom they learned the art of building. Baldinucci and Niccolini pronounce them imitators or disciples of Arnolfo; but we would prefer to adopt the opinion of Father Lanzi, who says that they were his preceptors, had it not been ascertained that Arnolfo learned the art from Niccola Pisano.[1] To remove all doubt on this subject, it may suffice to state that Arnolfo survived Fra Ristoro twenty-seven, and Fra Sisto twenty-one, years.[2] Two illustrious architects were then living in Tuscany, Jacopo, whom Vasari calls the German, and Niccola Pisano. The first, who was the architect of the church and convent of St. Francis in Assisi, built the Rubiconte bridge in Florence, laid the piers of the Carraja, A.D. 1218, finished the church of S. Salvadore del Vescovado, after his own designs, also the church of S. Michele, in piazza Bertelde, (now called degli Antinori,) and the palace of the Podestà, which, it appears, he did not complete. The second, who was well known for the splendid works which he erected in his own country, in Bologna, in Padua, in Venice, and Naples, built the church of the holy Trinity in Florence, about the year 1250. Greater architects than these were not living in Tuscany at this period; and it is probable that Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro availed themselves of the teaching and productions of the two. The Necrology of their convent does not state the year in which they took the Dominican habit;

[1] Baldinucci, Notizie dei Professori del disegno. v. i. Vita di Arnolfo. G. B. Niccolini, Elogio di L. B. Alberti, Lanzi, vol. i., part 1, Tuscan School. That Arnolfo was a disciple of Niccola is now placed beyond doubt by the "Lettere Sanesè" of F. Guglielmo della Valle, vol. i. lettera xviii.

[2] Baldinucci dates Arnolfo's death as having taken place either in 1300, or 1320. The Necrology of Sta. Reparata states the period to have been 1310.

nevertheless, F. Fineschi conjectures that they entered religion about the period when F. Aldobrandino Cavalcanti (twice prior of the convent of S. Maria Novella,) caused the ancient church of this name to be enlarged. In all likelihood it was at this period that the two youthful architects, after receiving the habit of S. Dominic, proffered their services for this work, just as Filippo da Campello superintended the construction of the great church of Assisi, after taking the habit of St. Francis.[1] Cavalcanti was prior of Sta. Maria Novella from 1244 to 1252. In 1255 F. Enrico da Massa filled that office; and in 1256 Cavalcanti was re-elected. F. Borghigiani agrees with Fineschi in this chronology.[2]

The first essay of their skill in architecture, recorded in ancient documents, is a public work to which they were invited by the Florentine magistracy. Desiring to finish the Palace de Priori, begun in 1252 by Jacopo, called the German, they were charged to raise large vaults, or it may have been a court-yard or cloister (magnas testudines); and this they executed with such excellence, that the city resolved to employ them in works of greater importance.[3] In the early part of October of the year 1269, the Arno, swollen by heavy rains, carried away its embankments, and inundated a great tract of the adjacent country and the city of Florence. The flood was so great that it bore along in its impetuous course a great

[1] Fineschi. Memorie, p. 343.

[2] Cronaca Annalistica del Conv. di S. M. Novella, dall' anno della sua fundazione fino all' anno 1556, del P. Borghigiani, v. iii. in Fol. M.S. (Archiv. di S. M. Novella.)

[3] F. Fineschi is of opinion that the palace of the priors, of which there is mention in the Necrology, was probably that of the Podesta, now called del Bargello, not the Palazzo Vecchio, built by Arnolfo in 1298, when the two Dominican architects were dead. From a passage in Villani, (b. viii. c. 26) it appears that the priors had no fixed abode anterior to 1298.

quantity of trees and wood, which, coming into violent contact with the piers of the bridge della S. Trinità, swept them away, utterly destroying at the same time the bridge called la Carraja.

This inundation caused many deaths, and the destruction of many buildings. The Republic, desiring to restore the two bridges and the ruined edifices, engaged many architects, amongst whom were the two lay-brothers of S. Maria Novella, to whom it especially entrusted the rebuilding of the Carraja. In all probability the other (la Trinita) was confided to Arnolfo.[1] Vasari, Baldinucci, Lanzi, Cicognara, together with the two Dominican historians, Fineschi and Bitiotti, affirm that Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro rebuilt both bridges. F. Borghigiani mentions only one bridge, La Trinità; and what is truly strange, F. Timoteo Bottonio attributes to them the Rubaconte, which had not been injured by the flood. None of them cite documents. Relying, therefore, on the grave authority of the Necrology of S. Maria Novella, which was written by a contemporary, we must conclude that the Carraja alone was rebuilt by the two lay-brothers. Some have believed that the actual beautiful bridge of this name is the same that was erected in 1269 by Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro; but this is a manifest error, the present bridge being the work of another Dominican, of whom we shall have occasion to speak elsewhere. Villani, an indubitable authority, states that

[1] The Guide Book of 1830, errs in stating that the Carraja was built of stone in 1318, after the designs of Arnolfo. It adds, moreover, that it was built of stone, by Ammanato, under Cosimo I. The Guide of 1841, gives it as probable that Fra Giovanni da Campi, was employed to restore it in 1334. Nor is the recent Guide, by Fantozzi (1842), more accurate, as it states that this bridge was rebuilt by T. Gaddi, A.D. 1333. Elsewhere we will have to speak of this bridge.

before and after the flood of 1269, the Carraja was a wooden bridge, and that Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro built the piers of stone, as Jacopo, the German, is said to have done in 1218. Such, however, was the solidity of their construction, that they resisted the terrible floods of 1282, 1284, and 1288. Subsequently, however, when the wooden bridge was destroyed in the fashion that Villani describes, a new one, entirely of stone, was built in 1304. This having been swept away by the extraordinary and ever-memorable inundation of 1333, was reconstructed as it is at present.

The chroniclers of S. Maria Novella have reason to believe that the two architects executed other works in Florence, as well for the Republic as for private citizens, but in such poverty of materials we are not enabled to confirm their opinion. I find, however, that the Guide-book of 1841 conjectures that Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro erected the little church of St. Remigio in Florence, and this conjecture is founded on the similarity of its style to that of S. Maria Novella. F. Joseph Richa has proved the first to be long anterior to the second, and thinks it furnished the two lay-brother architects with the idea of their new church. Sigr. Federigo Fantozzi, in his GUIDE, (published 1842,) brings the following arguments against the opinion of the learned Jesuit: "'Tis very unlikely that this church could have served as a model to the Dominican architects for the magnificent temple of S. Maria Novella, as many have written and supposed, since, if it be true, as it really seems indisputable, that about the year 1428 the church of S. Remigio passed from the patronage of the bishop to that of the people, as their reward for having renewed (rinnovata) it about that period, . . . it is clear that it could not have served as a model for

S. Maria Novella, which was erected in 1278."[1] To this reasoning, I think that the architecture of the church itself is opposed, for as far as I am able to judge it, it appears to be of extreme antiquity, and not very unlike that of La S. Trinità and S. Maria Novella. In Florence architecture had made such progress under Brunellesco, and L. B. Alberti, during 1428, that one would find it hard to believe that there could have been a desire to perpetuate the Gothic style in despite of the new methods; and it is probable that the word "renewed" was employed to signify the simple restoration of the ancient edifice. Howsoever that may be, I will leave the subject to be discussed by more competent critics, as I have not documents that could prove our architects to have been the builders of this church. But there is one work of theirs which has given celebrity to their name—the church of S. Maria Novella, of which they furnished the designs. The reader will pardon us if we be prolix in speaking of this hallowed temple, since it has been always regarded as a sanctuary of art, to which the Dominican artists consecrated their genius for more than a century and a half.

We cannot say in what year the Dominicans appeared for the first time in Florence. The annalists of the order and F. Fineschi assert that they arrived there in 1219.[2] Their first appearance in a city seemed to have a special

[1] A D. 1291, the Republic voted a sum "pro reparatione Pontis Carrariæ," and on the 21st September (same year), 200 flor. parv. ad opus et laborerium Pontis S. Trinitatis. V. Gaye Carteggio Inedito. The sum voted for the Carraja (25 parv. fl.), would show that it did not sustain much damage.

[2] Annal. Ord. Præd. Vol. i., p. 245. Fineschi, Memorie, etc. Præfaz. e vita del B. G. da Salerno.

character. Few, or many, they presented themselves to the people, and tendered their services to them. When they lacked an asylum they betook themselves to one of the public hospitals, situated near the gates of cities, and then abounding and munificently maintained throughout Italy for the reception of poor pilgrims. What a blessed economy was this, at a period when internecine wars, and the rage of factions cast so many houseless on the high-ways! In the day time they dispersed themselves through the churches and piazzas, inviting the people to come and hear their sermons. For their support they trusted to God and the charity of the faithful—where civil discord raged they exhorted to peace, and employed all their energies to promote friendship. Wheresoever error had crept in they proved themselves champions of the faith, and successfully encountered the teachers of false doctrines. Thus did they comport themselves in Florence, where they arrived, numbering twelve members, under the guidance of the blessed Giovanni da Salerno; the hospital near the gate of S. Gallo was their first domicile in this city; and there did they fix their abode, till the bishop, of his liberality, bestowed on them the small oratory of S. Jacopo, in Pian di Ripoli, two miles distant from Florence. Compassionating them for the fatigue they were obliged to endure in coming such a distance each day to preach in the city, he soon afterwards conducted them to another hospital called S. Pancrazio, which probably stood near the ancient gate of that name.[1]

[1] The nuns of the order of St. Dominick were located at Pian di Ripoli in 1224. In the year 1292, they removed to Florence, and were established in Via della Scala. This convent was suppressed in 1787, by the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo, who employed it as a conservatory for the daughters of the nobility. The Dominican nuns of Florence were amongst the earliest and most zealous encouragers of the art of printing. In 1476, Fra Do-

It was here that they were met by S. Dominic, on his arrival in Florence in the year 1219: nor should we forget to mention that the holy founder on entering Siena met his brethren in the public hospital of St. Mary Magdalene, as they had no other refuge at the time. The number of the brotherhood having increased in the year 1220, some of them took up their abode with the Canons of S. Paul, in Palazzuolo. In August, 1221, Cardinal Ugolino, the Pontifical Legate, arrived in Florence, from Bologna, where he had been attending the obsequies of S. Dominic, who passed out of this life on the 6th of the said month, and, finding the friars (whom he sincerely loved) very poorly accommodated, he lost no time in providing them with a suitable habitation. After two months negociation he procured from the bishop and the chapter of the cathedral, the small parochial church of S. Maria "tra le vigne," or as it is often called "La Novella;" and on the 12th of November, it was formally consigned to the Dominicans, who, on the 20th of the same month, took possession of it. To establish a convent was their first object; and having obtained the Legate's sanction, they sold some lands which had belonged to the aforesaid church. The ancient church, a part of which is now under the actual, was in length equal to the distance

menico da Pistoja, and Fra Pietro da Pisa (O. S. D.), the spiritual directors of this convent, established a printing-press and type-foundery, within its precincts. Some of the nuns did the work of compositors, and the celebrated Bartolommeo Fonzio, made the corrections. Many works were issued from this press between 1476 and 1484. When Domenico da Pistoja died (1484), the nuns ceased to print. F. Fineschi has published "Historical Notices of the Printing-press of Ripoli, to illustrate the Typographical History of Florence." 1 vol. octavo. Florence, 1781. See also Moreni Bibliografia Storico-ragionata della Toscana. Vol. i., p. 372.

[1] The first habitation of the Dominicans, at Milan, was the hospital of St. Barnabas, where they arrived, twelve in number, A.D. 1218.

between the chapel of S. Thomas and the steps of the grand altar; the door of entrance opened on the piazza vecchia; and a fragment of the cloister erected by our religious of that period may still be seen in the cemetry, where the arches have been filled up with masonry. Meanwhile the community was rapidly enlarging itself; and numbers of the Florentine youth, distinguished for birth, knowledge, and riches, asked the habit from the blessed John of Salerno. When the latter died, he left behind him one whose genius and piety had great influence over the citizens—this was F. Aldobrandino Cavalcanti, and to him mainly was the young community indebted for its extension.

In the year 1244, the Pontiff, Innocent IV., having learned that the Manichean heresy was being disseminated by the Ghibelline faction in Florence, commissioned S. Pietro di Verona, to proceed to the city and use every exertion to eradicate such baneful tares. The sanctity of his life, and the fervid eloquence for which the Veronese was distinguished, gave him great influence with the Florentines. Such a concourse come to hear him preach that the church and contiguous piazza could not afford sufficient accommodation: the saint, therefore, besought the republic to enlarge the piazza di S. Maria Novella, (then the widest in Florence,) and a decree, dated December 12, 1244, ordained that a considerable number of houses should be forthwith removed.[1] F. Aldobrandino saw the necessity of enlarging the church, in order that the people might not be exposed to the inclemency of the weather whilst hearing the Divine word, and immediately applied himself to the realisation of his project. In the

[1] This precious document, which must have escaped the learned F. Campano, in his life of S. Pietro, M., was published, I believe, for the first time, by F. G. Richa (1755), in the work entitled "Notizie Storiche delle Chiese Fiorentine," and more recently by F. Fineschi, in 1790.

first instance he wrote to the pontiff, and obtained from him two briefs granting indulgences to those who by alms would contribute to the erection of the new building: pending the erection of the new church he resolved to enlarge the old one. The superintendence of the work was confided to F. Pasquale dell' Ancisa, and F. Pagano degli Adimari, who must have been well skilled in architecture, as we shall see when describing the works which they carried on in other parts of Tuscany. At this period F. Aldobrandino invested many of the most respectable citizens with the Dominican habit; but foremost of all were the two youthful architects, who had resolved to co-operate in the holy work, after having put on the insignia of the order—these were Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro; who, says F. Fineschi, were joined by a certain Fra Domenico,[1] and other men skilled in the building and stone-cutting art. According to the biographer whom we have quoted, these events must have taken place in 1256, or in the year following. As soon as the church had been somewhat enlarged the friars wished to embellish it with paintings by those Greeks whom the Republic had invited to Florence about the middle of the thirteenth century, to teach their art to the growing generation. Strange, indeed it is, that the Republic preferred the Greeks to the Pisan and Sienese painters: who were certainly not inferior to the former. This surely is an important fact in the history of art; and thus it was that the Dominicans may be said to have given the first impulse to the genius of Cimabue.[2] Not content with

[1] The Necrology of this Domenico does not give him the usual title "magister lapidum," or architectus; neither is he so mentioned in the document cited by F. Fineschi, in the Life of the B. John di Salerno, p. 71. How, then, can he be enumerated amongst the Dominican artists?

[2] The Greeks were twice engaged to paint in S. Maria Novella. First in

their apostolic labours, but wishing to cary out the very letter of their rule, which commands them to make themselves useful, the Dominicans opened a grammar school (in this century and that which followed, such is the designation given to the study of Latin,) for the education of the Florentine youth, and their own novices. The teacher at that period was an uncle of Cimabue, but whether he was a friar or secular priest does not appear.[1] The nephew frequented the school, but was wont to escape from his books to watch the Greek painters in the church; at school, instead of attending to the grammar lesson, he employed himself in making rude sketches with the pen; and the fathers wishing to encourage his inclinations, entrusted him to the Greeks. He was destined to be the founder of the Florentine School of Painting—there is now, however, no vestige of the frescos painted by the Greeks. These that now remain are by an unknown hand of the school of Giotto, and were executed in 1348.[2] Lanzi says that in his day a fragment of the plaster having fallen down, revealed a remnant of a very rude painting by the Greeks. It would be difficult after the lapse of so many ages, and the various modifications of the church, to realise an idea of its form or beauty in the olden time. It appears, however, to have been low and narrow; the vaultings were coloured in ultra-marine blue, studded with golden stars; and the walls, from cornice to

the ancient church, and then in the new. From not being able to distinguish these two epochs, many controversies have arisen amongst critics on art. Cimabue must have studied the paintings of the old church, and not of the actual, which was commenced in 1279, when he was already thirty-nine years of age.

[1] When the grammar-master was not a religious, he received from the convent a florin per month, together with food and lodging. It appears from the ancient records that multitudes came from Tuscany and the Papal States, to study Latin in Florence, in the fourteenth century, attracted thither by the fame of the blessed Guido Regiolano. Archiv. di S. Maria.

[2] V. Borghigiani, and Fineschi.

basement, were covered with scenes from the life of the Virgin and the Saints.

But F. Aldobrandino Cavalcanti was not to be satisfied with a church of such poor dimensions; he had long since resolved on raising a temple far excelling all others in Florence, and to this end he collected alms, and exerted all his energies with the citizens. The Dominicans whose relatives were wealthy did the same. The fact of having two skilful architects in the convent was an additional stimulus, and he was just about to commence the work when Gregory X., appointed him to the See of Orvieto. This appointment which took place in 1272, retarded the work for seven years. When the pontiff set out for the Ecumenic Council of Lyons, he appointed F. Cavalcanti, to be his Vicar at Rome; an office which he retained during the pontificates of Gregory's three successors, (Innocent V., Adrian V., John XXI.,) till the year 1277, when, on the accession of Nicholas III., he obtained permission to go back to Orvieto. For about two years he continued to govern that church, till, on account of his failing health, he got leave to return to his own country, bringing with him a conderable sum of money for his church of S. Maria Novella. Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro then produced their plan, and it was no sooner seen than approved of. Just as he was about to lay the first stone, God called to himself, Monsignore Aldobrandino Cavalcanti, on the 31st of August, 1279. The honor was reserved for another religious in higher dignity; and, indeed, the foundation of this church is associated with one of the grandest and most auspicious passages in Florentine history.

Fra Latino Malabranca, nephew of Pope Nicholas III., and Legate to the republic, having established peace between the factions known in Bologna, as the Geremei and Lambertazzi, and having acted in like manner amongst the other Guelfs and Ghibellines of Romagna, came to Florence,

at the pontiff's bidding, charged with the same merciful mission. Let us hear Villani—"He came to Florence, accompanied by three hundred gentlemen, on the 8th of October, A.D. 1278 (old style); and was received with marked distinction, by the Florentines and clergy, who went out to meet him, and accompany his carriage into the city. On the 18th of October, in the same year, being the feast of St. Luke, the Evangelist, he laid and blessed the first stone of the new church of S. Maria Novella, of the Preaching-Friars, of whom he was a member; and there upon that very spot he exhorted Guelfs and Ghibellines to peace." Such was the joyful event that marked the foundation of a temple, erected by the devotion of the faithful to the God of peace. When, however, the ambition of the Buondelmonti rekindled the fires of discord, the indefatigable Legate, with still greater pomp, solemnised a peace in February following. "Having summoned the Florentines," continues Villani, "to a parley in the Piazza Vecchia of said church (S. Maria Novella) . . . . A great pulpit being erected for the cardinal, in presence of the bishops, prelates, clerics, religious, podestas, and all the various orders of Florence, he pronounced a noble discourse, such as was suitable to the occasion, and worthy of such a wise and eloquent preacher. When the sermon was concluded, the syndics deputed by the Guelfs and Ghibellines, kissed each other on the mouth, to the great joy of the citizens."[1]

Under such auspices was the church of S. Maria Novella commenced. In these ages of faith, the erection of a monastery or church was a cause of universal joy. The poor man knew that in these asylums he could share the bread that the friar begged at the portals of the rich; the learned sought the society of their inmates, to listen

[1] Vilanni Cronaca., lib. vii., c. 6. Macchiavelli Storie Fiorentine, lib. ii.

to their lore; the artists found in them a source of inspiration, encouragement, and remuneration for their labours; souls enamoured of heaven were there comforted with the spiritual aliment needful for their trials; and the people, almost invariably oppressed, regarded the monks as their champions and defenders. No wonder, then, if the people contributed their strength and their substance to the building of these churches and cloisters, from which so many blessings have flowed for the benefit of the human race.

From the very beginning of the work, the two lay-brothers, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, were appointed its architects. Many of their brethren, who were excellent stonemasons, and of whom we will have occasion to speak, toiled at the building with singular industry. The overseers and architects all belonged to the convent. So much so, that this beauteous temple was built by their own hands, without the intervention of a single secular—a very rare fact in the history of art.[1] When the basilica of Assisi, the duomi of Florence, Orvieto and Milan, were projected, it was customary to compete for the appointment of architect; and invitations were held out to strangers. Not so with the Dominicans; those who now consecrated their genius and their arms to this great work were all of the same soil, of the same institute, and of the same convent.[2]

The Republic having examined the plans, concluded that it would be the fairest church in all Florence; and, being at all times munificent patrons of art, they voted an annual sum of ten thousand florins, and a hundred bushels of lime, till such time as the work was completed. Such

[1] The following superintended the building of S. Maria Novella:—Fra P. dell' Ancisa, to 1284; Fra Rainerio Gualterotti (called the Greek), to 1317; Fra Jacopo Passavanti, who witnessed its completion about 1317.

[2] The Cistercian Friars, in Flanders, deserve the same eulogium. V. Milizia. Mem. degli Architetti Ant e Mod.

generosity found a response in the hearts of the people; and many of the noble families, and bishops whose relatives were members of this convent, contributed large sums to the undertaking.[1] But what tended most to its accomplishment was the eloquence of the far-famed Fra Remigio, who, to distinguish him from the literary celebrity of the same name in the sixteenth century (who also belonged to this convent) is called the SENIOR. Gifted with glorious genius and natural fluency, he raised pulpit eloquence to the highest dignity both in style and conception. His, however, was not the enthusiastic and impetuous diction of Fra Giovanni da Vicenza, who saw four hundred thousand human beings swayed by his tongue, abjuring their hates, and rushing into each other's embrace; unlike that terrible Savonarola, before whom the Medici quailed, and whom the people worshipped, Fra Remigio, if we be allowed the comparison, reminds us of Casa's discourses to Charles the Fifth, written, however, in all the simplicity of the thirteenth century. One of his orations, pronounced when the priors and gonfaloniere were entering on their office (December 25, 1293), made a thrilling appeal on behalf of the church of Santa Maria Novella; nor was it inefficacious, for the Republic made two grants to the building, the one on the 23rd of September, 1295, and the other on the 6th of June, 1297.

The plan of the church of S. Maria Novella[2] is a Latin cross, with nave, and aisles. Six pointed arches resting upon as many pilasters of the stone called PEPERINO, and adorned

[1] Anno 1295, 23 Sept., Pro Ecclesiæ S. M. Novellæ Constructione, libr., 1200 f. p. (flor. parvor), persolvendæ in quatuor terminis pro anno futuro initiando in kalend. Januarii proxime venturi. Anno 1297, 6 Junii. Pro Ecclesia S. M. N. quæ de novo refficitur, et rehedificatur, libr. 1200 f. p., in termino unius anni. Gaye, Archiv. delle Riformagioni. Vol. i., app. 2.

[2] For the dimensions of this church *see document* No. 1.

with four mezzo-columns of the same material, extend along its whole length on either side. The vaultings and arches are so beautifully disposed, that there appears to be but one point of difference between the architecture of Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, and that of Orgagna in the following century. No one can see this church without discovering how well these architects had penetrated the secret of perspective; for, being viewed from its threshold, it appears much longer than it really is. This illusion, we need not say, is produced by the admirable arrangement of the arches, the span of which diminishes gradually from the entrance to the end of the building. In fact, so happy is the adaptation of all the details, that the eye must fail to discover the massive iron chains which were employed at that period to strengthen the vaultings. Simple and majestic, solid and light, it embraces an ensemble of beauties that makes it the fairest in Florence, and, according to Richa and Fineschi, the most graceful in Italy. Never let us forget the criticism of Michelangelo, who called it his "gentle spouse" (Sposa Gentile). It is, beyond doubt, the precursor of Brunellesco's architecture. Here you do not find that multiplicity of detail that wearies the eye, and produces confusion; nor the superfluity of decoration which at that period was employed to ornament the sacred edifices. Here all is rare and majestic simplicity. Behold it arrayed in its pomp on festal days, draped in silk and gold, with its altars lighted; or better still, contemplate it in its severe simplicity, at sunset, when the grand shadows of the pillars cross each other, falling on the opposite walls, and the richly-tinted twilight streams through its storied windows, colouring every object around, and you will feel a thousand celestial thoughts springing up in your soul.[1] Be it

[1] In the fifteenth century there was published a little volume (now, I

emembered, to the honour of these two architects, that Florence did not furnish them with models of such beauty s this; for it was not till 1294 that Arnolfo laid the oundation of S. Croce, and S. Maria del Fiore was not egun till 1298; that is to say, the first fourteen years, nd the second eighteen after the building of S. Maria Novella, when the Dominican architects had passed out f this life. Historic impartiality, however, dictates that great part of the glory derivable from this beauteous difice should be given to two other architects of the same onvent, who witnessed its completion in the succeeding entury.

The Necrology of the convent having narrated the vorks of the two lay-brothers in their own country, goes n to say, that their fame soon reached Rome, and that he pontiff (who he was is not quite certain) invited them o work in his own palace, and to construct some vaults, primas testudines,) as they had already done in that of he Prior's or Podesta's at Florence. In all probability he pope in question was Nicholas III., the uncle of Cardinal Latino, whom we have seen laying the first tone of S. Maria Novella, and who, 'tis likely, mentioned he lay-brothers to his holiness. If this be true, it must ave been before the August of 1280, in which year and nonth Nicholas III., died.

Here I may be permitted to hazard a conjecture on a question which may be satisfactorily resolved in time to come. Comparing the date of the arrival of the two lay-brothers in Rome, with that of the building of S. Maria

believe, lost,) entitled, "De Pulchritudine Sanctæ Mariæ Novellæ." It is quoted by Savonarola in one of his orations to the Florentine Republic. V. Marlamacchi "Vita di Savon.," p. 70. Lucca, 1764. Marchese has forgotten to mention the time in which this church was consecrated. The inscription on the north pier of the chancel arch, states that Pope Martin V. performed the ceremony, on the 7th Sept., 1420.

sopra Minerva, of the same Order, I am of opinion tha
Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro may have furnished the de
sign, and for some time superintended that work. Th
architecture of this church, if unequal to, is not unlik
that of S. Maria Novella, save in lightness, of which i
vastness did not permit, as, with the exception of th
three Basiliche, it is the largest in Rome. The cruciform
character is precisely the same. The two lateral chapel
of the great altar, and the principal chapels correspond
with these of S. Maria Novella in Florence. So likewis
do the clustered columns; or, in other words, the pilaste
decorated with four demi-columns. In fact, if it had no
been frequently modernized, it is probable that the ey
at one glance, might recognise the architecture of Fr
Sisto and Fra Ristoro. Let us compare the epoch
This very F. Aldobrandino Cavalcanti, who had give
the religious habit to Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, an
engaged them to design S. Maria Novella, being i
Rome in his capacity of vicar to the Pope, confirme
the surrender made by the Benedictine nuns in Campu
Martius, of the ancient and small church of S. Mari
sopra Minerva in favour of the Dominican Friar
(16th November, 1274.) It would appear that the ne
church had not then been commenced, for F. Fontan
quotes a brief of Nicholas III., dated June 24, 1280, (th
year probably in which the lay-brothers entered Rome.
addressed to John Colonna and Pandolfo Savelli, Roma
senators, exhorting them to give the promised subsidi
to the Preaching-Friars, in order to enable them to bui
the new church: and it is therein expressly mentione
that the foundations had been already laid, (cum itaqu
dicta Ecclesia incipiatur fabricari ad *presens*.") Aft
the death of Nicholas III., F. Fontana opines that th
building was not resumed till the election of Bonifac

VIII.; who issued a brief, (January 21, 1295, the first year of his pontificate,) directed to the prior of the Dominicans, which describes the commencement of the new church as "most sumptuous," (opere plurimum sontuoso.) It is true that Fra Ristoro had returned to Florence, but Fra Sisto remained at Rome eight consecutive years, during which time he might easily have conducted the building so as to merit for it the description of "most sumptuous" in 1295. Moreover, Fontana's assertion, that he remained idle for fully fourteen years, the period that intervened between the death of Pope Nicholas and the election of Boniface VIII., is altogether gratuitous.[1] The Necrology of S. Maria Novella states nothing of the sort, which it should have recorded; and, indeed, this negative argument is worthy some consideration; but, at the same time, it is very unlikely that the Dominicans would have invited strangers to do work, which could have been ably performed by two distinguished members of their own body, then actually in Rome.[2] Fontana, however, has not been able to determine the name of the architect. Giuseppe Vasi dates the cession of the ancient church (S. Maria sopra Minerva,) A.D. 1395. The same error occurs in the work entitled "Rome, Ancient and Modern," compiled out of the writings of Panvinio, Pancirolo, and Nardini. The Roman Guide, published in 1842, repeats the same error. M. D'Agincourt, (Hist. de L' Art,) states that it was built in the fourteenth century, in the pontificate of Gregory XI.; and wonders that the pointed arch should have appeared at this period in Rome, (vol. i. p. 2, p. 240.) His wonder, however, is quite unreasonable; for although Orgagna employed the rounded arch at Flo-

[1] De Rom. Prov. Ord. Praed. c, ii. Tit. 1.

[2] In 1636 the Director of the modifications made in the Minerva was Giov. M. da Pesaro, a Dominican lay-brother.

rence about the year 1370; it is not less certain that the "pointed" prevailed for many years in other Italian cities. The duomo of Milan commenced at the close of that century: and S. Petronio di Bologna, that was begun in 1392, are sufficient proofs of this. But, as we have already said, the church della Minerva is more ancient by one century.

M. Valery, after visiting the churches of the Dominicans, (SS. John and Paul in Venice, S. Nicholas in Trevigi, S. Maria Novella in Florence, the Minerva at Rome, and S. Domenico Maggiore in Naples,) was astonished at the peculiar character of the Gothic architecture of the period, which he pronounces noble, simple and majestic.[1] Such, too, is the opinion of Montalembert regarding the Dominican churches in France;[2] which, says the learned writer, suffered so much from popular fury in the revolutions of the last century. Alas! that we are obliged to record the same of some of them even in Italy!

How little soever one may be read in the political, religious, or literary history of Italy, he cannot cross the threshold of the Minerva at Rome without experiencing a tumult of ideas, alternately sad and joyful; without beholding, as it were, the triumphal entry of the sixteenth century, and its blood-stained exit. Leo X. Bembo and Paolo Manuzio who moulder beneath its vaults, remind us of our literary and artistic glories—of Raffaello and Buonarrotti. The tombs of Clement VII.

[1] Voyages Historiques et Litter. d' Italie, liv. xii. c. 8.

[2] Du Vandalisme et du Catholocisme dans l'Art. Paris, 1839, p. 47. "Je vous fais observer en passant qu' une sorte de fatalitè toute particuliere semble s' attacher aux Eglises construites par les Dominicains, toujours d' un gout si simple, si pur, si regulier: elles sont partout choisies en premier lieu par les destructeurs."

and Paul IV. revive memories of the sack of Rome, of the Reformation, and the terrible beleaguering that the Pontifical See had to sustain. From such reminiscences as these the mind seeks comfort at the sepulchre of the blessed Angelico da Fiesole, and at that of the holy maiden of Siena, whose eloquence, more persuasive than Petrarca's, restored the throne of the pontiffs to the eternal city.

Here terminate the notices of Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro. The first died at Rome, in March, 1289, whilst carrying on works for the Dominican nuns of the monastery of S. Sisto; the second in his own country, in 1283: and he desired that his ashes should repose in that temple which confers a title to glory on the twain.[1] These two architects are highly lauded by Vasari, in his Life of Gaddo Gaddi; by Bottari, in a note to his Life of Fra Giovanni Angelico; by Baldinucci, in his Memoirs of Arnolfo; by Lanzi, in the History of Painting; but especially by Cicognara, in his invaluable History of Italian Sculpture. Observe what he says: "It is strange that the names of Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, both Florentines, and builders of the principal bridges of the Arno, to say nothing of their other works in the city, and in the Vatican, should be almost shrouded in oblivion. Why is it that no mention is made of Fra Jacopo Talenti da Nipozzano, who, along with the foresaid, raised so many edifices in Florence? These architects of the thirteenth century, (Talenti belongs to the

[1] The following is an entry in the Necrology of S. Maria Novella: "Fr. Ristorus conversus de Campi, hic fuit maximus architectus et una cum fratre Sixto converso, qui est infra, et obiit Romæ, et fecerunt nostram Ecclesiam tanto siquidem artificio ut usque hodie sit in admirationem, et hi duo fecerunt magnas testudines palatii dominorum Priorum Florentiæ, et pontem Carragiæ, et primas testudines domini Papæ, ubi obiit Fr. Sixtus.

"Fr. Sixtus conversus de porta, S. Pancratii de vico qui dicitur S. Sixtus, obiit Romæ in loco dominarum S. Sixtii, A D. 1289, m. martii.

fourteenth,) have an immense claim on our gratitude, for to them we owe the splendid revival of architecture. After the Pisan architects, and the builders of the Basilica at Venice, they deserve the highest place in Italy."[1]

Before closing this chapter, we would fondly pray that some monument may be raised above their ashes to tell the native and the stranger their names and works. Florence did tardy justice to the memory of Arnolfo and Brunellesco; may the day soon come when she will show her gratitude to Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro in S. Maria Novella!

CHAPTER III.

Minor Tuscan Architects, their Works in Prato, Florence, and in Val d' Arno, etc.

That religious enthusiasm which was kindled in the hearts, not only of the Italian people, but in those of the ultramontanes also, is very discernible in the vast number of edifices which in these days arose, as it were by enchantment, in the cities, hamlets, and rural districts of Spain and Italy. In 1233 Fra Giovanni, a Dominican of Bologna, addressed the people of Reggio in that fervid strain of eloquence so efficacious at a period singularly remarkable for its bloody feuds. He appealed to them for means to enable him to erect a convent and church of his order in Reggio; "and then," writes a contemporary historian, "you might have seen the whole population making an offering of their services and chattels, nay, vieing with each other in activity and zeal." What was witnessed a few centuries before, when the Benedictines

[1] Cicognara, v. iii. lib. iii. c. i. pag. 45.

et about building their church in Dive, was repeated on this memorable occasion. Men, women, and children, noble, and plebeian, absolutely carried the materials for the sacred edifice, which, under the direction of a certain Fra Jacopino of the same Order, was finished in the brief term of three years.[1] The Perugian Magistracy confided the banner of the State to the blessed Niccolò Di Giovenazzo, telling him, at the same time, that wheresoever he planted it there should be raised a temple to S. Dominic, and an asylum for his children.[2] This zeal for church-building required a great number of architects, stone-masons, engineers, and other persons competent to superintend the works; and the new Orders, on this account, received many skilful persons into their ranks. This will appear more clearly from what we are about to write. When Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro died, the building of S. Maria Novella was continued uninterruptedly; and such was the abundance of able architects, that three lay-brothers of the same convent undertook various works in the neighbouring cities and towns of Tuscany. The names of these three, (according to the Necrology,) were Fra Mazzetto, Fra Borghese, and Fra Albertino Mazzanti. Of these, the second only could have learned the art from Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, unless we suppose that the other two had been his disciples before entering religion. We have not ascertained the birth place of Fra Mazzetto, the names of his

[1] Muratori, writing of this church, says, (Rer. Ital. Script. v. viii. pp. 1107–8:)—"A.D. 1233, on the festival of St. James, the first stone of this church was consecrated by Albertus, Archipresbyter of Reggio, and the bishop Nicholas. All the men and women of Reggio, great and small, noble and ignoble, citizens and peasants, carried stone, sand, and lime on their backs, in skins and baskets, and blessed was he who could carry most . . . and Fra Jacopino superintended the works."

[2] Fontana De Rom. Prov. Ord. Præd. Tit. vii. p. 103.

parents, or the year of his birth; but it is certain that he took the habit in the church of S. Maria Novella, A.D. 1298, when its two first architects had passed out of this world. About 1300 the superiors entrusted him with the building of the church of S. Dominic in Prato; and that work was greatly facilitated by the co-operation of Fra Niccolo Albertino, the same who was destined to wear the sacred purple, and to act such a remarkable part in the political history of his own country and Tuscany. The church of S. Dominic in that city was begun in 1281, in all probability after the designs of Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro; and F. Paul Pilastri conducted the works to the year 1300; but when the latter was sent to govern the convents of Pisa, Arezzo, Florence, etc., Fra Mazzetto took charge of it till its completion. This we confidently assert, despite Fineschi, who fancies that Mazzetta was engaged at it in 1281, whereas he did not receive the habit of the Order till 1298. Neither do we agree with Vasari, who affirms that the convent of Prato was restored by Giovanni Pisano in 1300; since it is indubitable that neither convent nor church were finished in 1322.[1] For this fact we are indebted to the researches of Emmanuele Repetti, who states, that on the 10th of February of that year, Fra Lapo, a Dominican, and one of the executors of Cardinal Niccolo Albertino, informed the magistrates of the city that the foresaid Cardinal had bequeathed a sum of money for the completion of this church and convent.[2] Fra Mazzeto continued to superintend these works for about ten years, and closed his days in Prato, (October 11th, 1310,) in the twelfth year of his religious life. The writer of the Necrology in S.

[1] V. Vasari's Life of P. Pilastri.

[2] Dizionario Geog. fisico stor. della Toscana, vol. iv. p. 649. Vasari's Life of Giov. and Nic. Pisano.

Maria Novella, records that "he was a devout religious, skilful and industrious in all matters connected with carpentry, and beloved by his brethren."[1] It would be very difficult to form an accurate judgment of the works of this architect in Prato, for the church having been destroyed by fire in 1647, has been almost wholly rebuilt after the design of Baccio del Bianco.[2]

Much more copious, however, are the documents relating to the two other architects, Fra Albertino Mazzanti and Fra Borghese. The first was born in Florence, A.D. 1260. From his father's name, which was Cambio, some have fancied that he was related to the celebrated Arnolfo, who was not the son of Lapo, as Vasari asserts, but of Cambio, as Baldinucci has shown.[3] He took the religious habit in S. Maria Novella, A.D. 1284, when Fra Sisto was in Rome, and Fra Ristoro had been one year dead. He served God thirty-five years in the institute of the Preaching-Friars, and was praised as an eminent architect. Aged fully sixty years, he passed out of this life in his convent of S. Maria Novella, A.D. 1319.[4]

Fra Borghese was born in Florence about 1250, and was the son of a certain Ugolino, architect, from whom he may have learned the rudiments of the art. When he took the habit in S. Maria Novella, in 1272, (being then in the twentieth year of his age,) Fra Sisto and Fra Ris-

[1] It may be useful to state that the word "Carpentarius," so frequently occuring in the Necrology, is invariably meant to signify an architect—the term employed to signify carpenter is "Lignarius," or "lignorum faber." Ducange, however, has no example of this sort.

[2] Repetti Dizion. l. c.

[3] Notizie dei professori del disegno, v. i.

[4] F. Albertinus dict. Mazzante filius Cambi, CARPENTARIUS, et in editiciis fratrum construendis persubtilis, obiit 1319, vixit in ord. circa 35. ann.' —Necrology, S. M. N.

toro were still living, and it is probable that he cultivated architecture under the guidance of these able masters. At that precise period they were collecting materials for the new edifice. When the first stone was laid by Cardinal Latino, (A. D. 1279,) Fra Borghese may have attained that degree of proficiency which must have made him a valuable accession to Sisto and Ristoro. The latter were not more than eight months engaged at S. Maria Novella, when they were invited to Rome to work in the Vatican, as we have already stated; and in their absence, none could have been more fitted to substitute them than Fra Borghese. Assisted by Albertino, in 1284, the two worked conjointly for many years. And, indeed, it would appear from a valuable hint of the learned Jesuit, Richa, that we should attribute to them the eastern aisle, built in 1307, when Fra Giovanni da Campi, and Fra Jacopo Talenti had not as yet taken the habit.[1] Work, and prayer, and profound study of the beautiful in art—always associating his aesthetic genius to the austerity of the anchorite—constituted the whole life of Fra Borghese, who, having spent forty years in the institute of the Preaching Friars, was called to the peace of the just, February 20, 1313. Much praise is due to these two architects for having realised the ideal of Sisto and Ristoro; since in works of this nature, if the executors lack science, the beauty of the edifice must be considerably, if not wholly, deformed.

Whilst Fra Mazzeto was superintending the church of S. Dominic, in Prato, and Borghese and Mazzanti that

[1] Lib. di Ricord. del Conv. di S. M. Novella. "In consideration of Fra Ugolino Minerbetti, who took the habit of S. Dominic, in 1298, the Minerbetti (family) gave 300 gold florins to build the eastern aisle; and Andrea Minerbetti, and his wife Francesca, were painted on the vault in fresco." Righa Not. Stor. delle C. Fiorentine. V. iii., p. 25.

of S. Maria Novella, some religious, either architects or amateurs of the art, undertook very many buildings in Tuscany. The church of S. Domenico, at Pistoja, which was commenced in 1280, was built, probably, after the designs of Fra Sisto and Ristoro, and F. Pasquale dall' Ancisa, whom we have seen employed at S. Maria Novella, superintended the works from 1279 to 1284. In this year, however, he must have come to Pistoja, leaving F. Rainerio Gualterotti to succeed him in Florence. All the hospices, which in former ages belonged to the Dominicans in Tuscany, were built about this period; and some of them, being enlarged, were subsequently used as convents. Exclusive of S. Vincenzo di Tridozio, in the Romagna, which belonged to S. Maria Novella, they amounted to eight; that of St. Domenico di Figline, a large town on the way between Arezzo and Florence, was entrusted to F. Pagano degli Adimari, who directed the works which were finally completed by F. Pietro Macci, an eminent architect. To Macci, likewise, was entrusted that of S. Maria Casciano, on the road that leads from Florence to Siena. That of S. Giovanni, in Val-d' Arno, was built by Fra Giovanni dell' Ancisa. The first and second of these, as well as that of S. Niccolo, in Monte Lupo, erected by the generosity of Saltarelli, a Dominican, and Archbishop of Pisa, had attached to it a public hospital, after the style of these which, at an earlier period, used to be built near the gates of every city, for the reception of pilgrims.[1] Thus did the Dominicans repay

[1] Besides the hospices mentioned in the text, the Dominicans possessed four more in Tuscany. The Necrology makes special mention of one of them, and we transcribe it here. "F. P. fil. Galigai de Maccis Sacerdos et predicator, cantor bonus, scriptor gratiosus, conversatione quietus, et fratribus gratus, ingeniosus circa mechanica, et ad edificia construenda industrius; fuit supprior in conv. flor., insuper conversationi, et recreationi fratrum nos-

the charity which the Tuscans evinced, when receiving them into the hospitals of S. M. Magdalene in Siena, and SS. Paul and Pancrazio, at Florence—when unknown, needing protection, and poor, they threw themselves on their generosity. When we remember that all these edifices were raised by architects, masons, and stone-cutters belonging to *one* convent, we can form some notion of the number and capabilities of the artists themselves.

CHAPTER IV.

Of some Portuguese Architects of the Thirteenth Century.

In order of time three Portuguese architects, illustrious for their learning and sanctity, and who accompanied their apostolic labours with the cultivation of the arts, should take precedence of all the Tuscan architects of whom we have been writing; but, in fact, they did not make architecture the business of their lives, and rarely exercised it. Indeed, we would have been disposed to speak of them simply as successful preachers of the divine

trorum studiose invigilans, et aliorum etiam pauperum hospitalitati intendens, hopitale de Fignino sibi a fratre Pagano de quo dictum est supra, sibi commissum, ad quem principaliter pertinebat, sua edificavit industria, lectos ibidem et alia ad hæc necessaria cum multa diligentia procurando, et qualiter fratres nostri omnes ibidem sufficientem refectionem haberent tam discrete, quam provide ordinavit ad quos pleniori ferebatur affectu. Fratre autem Pagano viam universæ carnis ingresso, cura hospitalis ipsius est ei principaliter credita, a Magistro Ordinis, qui super excrescentibus possessionibus supradicti hospitalis, utpote fidelis dispensator et prudens, territorium emit in S. Cassiano et locum pro fratribus simili modo recipiendis cepit edificare ibidem, quem morte preventus non potuit consumare. Vix. in ord. ann. 41, ob. 1301."

word, had not Milizia,[1] who ranks them amongst the most celebrated of ancient and modern architects, counselled otherwise. These are the blessed Gundisalvo, the blessed Peter Gonzales, and a certain venerable F. Lorenzo; who are better known as the "Three holy Architects." The lives of these men will serve to illustrate what we have already asserted, and prove, if proof be necessary, that the arts, in their earlier development, received an eminently religious character from the inmates of the cloister. The blessed Gundisalvo was born in the diocese of Braga, in Portugal, and at a very advanced period of his life, took the habit of the Preaching-Friars. Enamoured of solitude, and imitating the example of the anchorites of old, he built for himself an oratory and a cell in a lonely place, three leagues from the banks of the Douro, on the confines of the province called Tras-os-montes. This solitude was called Amaranthe. It is a fact worth noticing, that many persons attracted thither by the fame of his virtues and eloquence, began to construct habitations in the neighbourhood of the saint's cell; and in these humble beginnings the city of Amaranta had its origin. All historians attribute to this saint a magnificent bridge over the Tagus, and describe it a work of great solidity. In fact, for fully six centuries it withstood the immense masses of water that rushed against its piers. On the 10th of January, A.D. 1295, the holy architect passed to the glory of heaven; and on that day the Catholic Church celebrates his memory.

The blessed Peter Gonzalez, commonly called St. Telmo, was a native of the city of Astorga, in Spain, but spent the greater part of his life at Guimaranez, in Portugal, where he died, on the 15th of April, 1246. He,

1 Memorie degli architetti antichi e moderni. V. i., l. 1, c. 2.

too, was canonised. The Lusitanian historians, the Bollandists, and, on their authority, Milizia, state that he was the architect of a noble bridge over the Minho, between Rivadavia and Orense—a work, says Michele Pio, "too great for any king, and at which he laboured with his own hands."[1] F. A. Touron is of opinion that the writers we have quoted were led into an error on account of the similarity of the name, for, says he, "in the Portuguese idiom, the blessed Gundisalvo, is called Gonzalez, as is the blessed Peter:" from this he concludes that the bridge in question is simply that erected by the former over the Tagus.[2] The truth of this must have been better known to the Portuguese historians than to Touron; but, howsoever it be, we have no other architectural remain of either. F. Michele Pio makes honorable mention of Father Lorenzo Mendez, a Portuguese, and distinguished orator, who died in 1259, the same year as the blessed Gundisalvo; but he does not assert that he was an architect. Meagre as these notices are, it is consoling to find three religious occupied in works of public utility, and shedding a holy lustre on art, by the purity of their lives.[3]

[1] Vite degli uomini Illustri dell' Ord. di S. Domenico. P. I. lib. i, p. 1.

[2] Vies des Hommes Illustres de l'Ordre de S. Dom. Vol. i., liv. 1.

[3] I have not been able to discover any notices of the life of the Ven. Lorenzo Mendez, the architect of the bridge of Cavez. Two other holy architects are celebrated in Spain—Giovanni d' Ortega and Domenico della Calzava, concerning whom v. Milizia Memorie, &c., lib. 1, c. 2.

CHAPTER V.

Notices of the Life and Works of Fra Guglielmo, da Pisa, Sculptor and Architect—State of Sculpture in Italy, at the beginning of the Thirteenth Century—The first Works of Fra Guglielmo, in his own country and in Bologna.

Whosoever would desire to contemplate Pisa's Artistic glory, must not hope to find it during that turbid and feverish period when it bent beneath the bondage of the Medici. Let it rather be sought in these days memorable for the victory of Mont-Aperti[1]—in the days of the dreadful struggle with Genoa, when all the Guelphic cities of Tuscany were leagued to exterminate the Athens of Italy. Then it was that Niccola Pisano, following the precepts of Giunta and Bonanno, consulting the antique, and what was better still, the real, founded a school of sculpture and architecture, which may be said to have revived art in Italy. Truly it was a noble school that educated such men as Arnolfo, Giovanni, and Andrea of Pisa. Happy auspices of a glorious future! But alas for the Republic! prostrated by the Genoese at Meloria;[2] then besieged and taken by Castruccio;[3] sold and assassinated by the infamous Appiano,[4] she was doomed to fall, like a victim all bloody and mutilated, into the gripe of the Florentines. Then did the arts follow in the train of

[1] This battle was fought in 1260. The Lucchese historian writes of it, "Citra tempora salvatoris non fuit major clades." (Since the Saviour's days there was never such carnage.)

[2] The sea-fight at Meloria occurred in 1284.

[3] Castruccio died, A.D. 1328.

[4] Appiano, who died in 1398, treacherously slew Pietro Gambacorti, and usurped the government of the Republic.

the victors; and it was only from time to time that they deigned to bestow a smile of gratitude on that hospitable soil, which was consecrated by their resurrection. Amongst the great ones to whom Niccola had taught both sculpture and architecture, there was a youth whose genius equalled that of his contemporaries, and whose birth and piety raised him immeasurably above all competitors. This youth took the habit of the Preaching-Friars, and was the foremost of the sculptors whom the Order claims. But since his life and works are known to few, or, at least, badly described, we will do our best to illustrate both.

Fra Guglielmo Agnelli, was born in Pisa, of an honorable family. We do not know the year of his birth, nor would it be easy to discover it, as the notices of him which have descended to us are very meagre.[1] F. Michele Pio, without quoting any document, and showing himself very ignorant of this sculptor's life, would have us believe that he was born in 1222; but, as we shall have occasion to see, this assertion is not warranted by history. Perhaps it were better to profess ignorance of it, or to hazard a conjecture, and say that he was born in 1238, or thereabouts. Nature had gifted Agnelli with a gentle soul, which the example and the counsels of his parents inclined to the practices of virtue; so much so, that when he grew apace, and acquired fame as a sculptor, the people were wont to look on him as a man of sanctity. His intellect was prompt and vigorous: but more enamoured of the

[1] The cognomen "Agnelli," not mentioned in the original chronicle of the Convent of S. Catherine in Siena, and of which Alberti and Pio were ignorant, was well known to F. S. Razzi; and to Morrona, the historian of Pisa. Nearly all of them call him "blessed." Razzi has preserved his portrait, and the armorial bearings of the family; and their identity with these of Agnello Agnelli, a Pisan, and member of the Franciscan Order, leads us to believe that both were somehow related. In 1368, Giovanni Agnello was Doge of Venice.

beautiful revealed in nature's works, than of science or letters; whilst yet a youth, he committed himself to the teaching of Niccolo Pisano, whose fame had already surpassed that of Bonanno, and all his contemporaries. This, in my judgment, accounts for the preference which the Pisans of this period gave to sculpture and architecture. The chisel was prized beyond the pencil of Giunta. We have already remarked on the condition of the arts in Italy during the thirteenth century; and briefly alluded to that wonderful revolution of ideas and principles which induced art to renounce the imitation of the ancient methods for a new and imaginative style, which, certainly, did not lack either beauty or majesty. But miserable in the extreme was the state of painting and sculpture; so much so, that both one and the other, trammelled by old traditions, and still more retarded by the Byzantine productions, did not dare to break the chains of that servile imitation, and take nature (the most essential foundation of art,) for their model and exemplar. And here we may observe that the condition of painting was far more deplorable than that of sculpture, since time and human hands had obliterated almost every trace of the Grecian and Roman pencil; whereas sculpture could avail itself of many statues and bassi-relievi, which had escaped the devastating barbaric hordes. This, beyond doubt, is the reason why the progress of sculpture outstripped that of painting. Nor should we be understood to assert that many were not anxious to revive sculpture, or that their efforts were altogether fruitless, since we know that Benedetto Antelani in Parma, Biduino in Lucca, Bonanno in Pisa, Viligelmo in Modena, Gruamonte and Enrico in Pistoja, cultivated the art; but whether it was that they did not avail themselves of the masterpieces of antiquity, or did not study nature, they failed to obtain praise, and, most

certainly, did not hasten its progress. But when Niccolo Pisano began to study in Rome and in his own country, the remains of Grecian and Roman excellence, maturing that study by the contemplation of the real, then, and not till then, did sculpture cast off barbarism, and arise to a new life. Pisa contained two precious monuments adorned with bassi-relievi: the one, a Greek work, represented the history of Hippolytus and Phaedra; on the other (Roman) was sculptured the chase of Meleager. Niccolo, instead of the Byzantine models, presented the two Sarcophagi to his disciples, retaining nothing of the old school save the symbolism necessary for Christian art and its traditions. Cicognara gives us many of Niccola's designs, and some, too, of the golden age of sculpture, a glance at which will convince us how intently he applied himself to the study of the latter, and how he laboured to imitate them, both in the nude and draped figures: struggling, as it were, to triumph over all the difficulties that opposed themselves to that first attempt.[1] Being likewise an eminent architect, he indoctrinated his disciples inth is branch; and, indeed, they all became more or less distinguished in both these arts. When Agnelli placed himself under Niccola, his companions may have been Giovanni, (Niccolo's son,) and Arnolfo and Lapo, the Florentines. In that age, as well as in the following, art had not begun to embellish the mansions of the great, but served solely as the handmaid of religion, from which it derived its inspirations, and for whose lustre it wrought. Guglielmo, not satisfied with consecrating his genius and his chisel to religion, determined to sacrifice himself entirely to God; and in the convent of S. Catherine of Pisa, in the year 1257, as far as we have been able to ascertain, he received the habit

[1] Storia della Scultura. Tav. xiii., xiv.

of the Order of S. Dominic. Influenced either by a sentiment of humility, or a desire to have more leisure for the exercise of his art, he determined to be enrolled amongst the lay-brothers.

The Dominicans appeared in Pisa, in the year 1221; and, as it happened elsewhere, such was the concourse attending their sermons, that it became necessary for them to build a new and vast temple. This building was begun in 1252; and Morrona would have us believe that the design was furnished by Niccola, and that Guglielmo executed it. Supposing then that the latter was born in 1238, it would be difficult to maintain the opinion of the learned Illustrator: for he should thus have been but fourteen years of age, a period certainly not suitable to such a work.[1] The same writer is of opinion, that Agnelli, wishing to give a proof of his proficiency in sculpture, made an essay on the façade of the same church, which may have been finished a few years subsequently. In Morrona's time there was an excellent piece of chiselling in the great spherical orifice on the centre of the façade; but with a great many other pieces of sculpture, it was either carried away, or misplaced, during the last century. That Fra Guglielmo applied himself with great assiduity to the building of the convent is indubitable; and it must have been well nigh finished in 1272, as the Fathers, amongst whom was St. Thomas of Aquino, held a general chapter there at that period. Elsewhere we will have occasion to speak of this convent, where in every age there flourished such a number of men remarkable for their learning and piety—a convent which has given to Italy Fra Domenico Cavalca, Fra Bartolomeo da S. Con-

[1] Pisa Illustrata. V. II., p. 1. The second volume of this learned work was published in 1792.

cordio, and Fra Giordano da Pisa, three of its best prose-writers.

Amongst the earliest of Fra Guglielmo's works, is the campanile of the Abbey of Settimo, in the neighbourhood of Florence, which bears this inscription:—

Guliel. me fecit

Morrona believes it to have been built by our friar; and Vasari recognises in it a disciple of Niccola Pisano, who faithfully followed the traces of the master.[1] And, indeed, it is probable that after finishing the building of that Abbey, Niccola, who had many commissions in various parts of Italy, may have left Guglielmo to erect the campanile after his own designs.

Whilst Agnelli was carrying on these and similar works, in his own country and out of it, under the guidance of Niccola, the Dominicans of Bologna had determined to erect a monument to S. Dominic, their founder, such as would excel every other in Italy. To this work they most wisely invited Niccola Pisano and Fra Guglielmo, about the year 1266. And since this is one of the most important facts in the history of Italian sculpture, we will speak of it at considerable length.

Giorgio Vasari has written that the marble urn containing the relics of S. Dominic, was sculptured by Niccola, in the term of six years, between 1225 and 1231. This date, admitted by all, has led many into error, and, what is strange, even the Count Leopoldo Cicognara. Malvasia, however, questioned it; and this doubt caused Virgilio Davia to conjecture the true date, although, for want of documents he could not determine it precisely.[2]

[1] Vasari's Life of Niccola and Giovanni Pisani.

[2] Memorie Storico-Artistiche intorno all' Arca di S. Domenico. 1 vol. 8vo. Bologna, 1838. A most valuable work, showing great taste for art.

With good reason did the author of the "Felsina Pittrice" argue, that the miracles of the saint could not have been sculptured on his monument before his canonization; and it was therefore very natural to conclude that these scenes were wrought subsequently. Let us examine the history.

S. Domenico di Guzman had closed his days in Bologna, on the 6th of August, 1221. His body, enclosed in a wood coffin, was buried without any pomp or pageant. The friars, wishing to avoid any charge of venality, were termed ingrates, because they prevented the people from worshipping the remains, and removed the votive offerings which the faithful made at his tomb. For twelve years the precious relics of the saint's mortality lay in their humble sepulchre. Finally, Pope Gregory IX. commanded the blessed Jordan of Saxony, the Second General of the Order, to transfer them to a more honorable place, as the process of the canonization had been commenced. Meanwhile, on the 23rd of May, A. D. 1233, in the presence of the Archbishop of Ravenna, of the Chief Magistrate of Bologna, and a countless crowd of the people, the wood coffin was raised from the earth, and the body, immediately after the autopsy, was enclosed in a marble urn; or, as some will have it, in one of stone. Of this we have a very precious document in the letter which the said Jordan of Saxony addressed to the whole Order of the Preaching-Friars on that occasion.[1] From all this it follows that the remains of S. Dominic had

[1] Ep. B. Jord. "Instrumentis fabrilibus lapis duriori cæmento sepulcro compaginatus aufertur . . . . . delatum est corpus ad monumentum marmoreum cum propriis aromatibus ibidem recondendum." (The stone covering the sepulchre was detached from the hard cement by masons' tools . . . . . and the body was borne to a marble monument to be there deposited with its own embalmments.)

lain till the 23rd of May, (1233,) in a coffin of wood; and, consequently, that Vasari's assertion is incorrect. That the urn, in which they were afterwards deposited, was unadorned with sculpture, is as easily collected from another precious document that has reached us. In fact, the second translation of S. Dominic's body took place on the 5th of June, A. D. 1267; and the blessed Bartolomeo Bishop of Vicenza, of the Order of Preaching-Friars, who was present, wrote a full account of the ceremony, and described how the Archbishop of Ravenna removed the relics of the holy founder from an urn of stone, *not* sculptured, to a marble one which *was* sculptured, ("de tumulo lapideo non caelato, ad marmoreum et caelatum.") The only discrepancy between this statement of the bishop and that of Jordan of Saxony is, that the former calls it a *stone* urn, the latter, one of marble. This discrepancy arises, probably, from the quality of the stone employed. And, indeed, Michele Pio says it was simple stone; white, however, and beautiful, but according to the usage of the times, rough and square. This we think removes all doubt as to the date of this marvellous work of Niccola Pisano. Moreover, I hold it to be indubitable that he did not execute it till the early part of 1266, or, at farthest, a little anterior to that date; since it appears from his life that he returned to his own country on the 29th of September, 1266, and made a contract with Fra Melano,[1] a Cistercian, to sculpture the pulpit for the

[1] Cicognara. Stor. della Scult., l. 3. P. Guglielmo della Valle Lettere Sanesi. Vol. 1, Lett. xviii. For this wonderful work (the Pulpit of Siena,) Niccola Pisano received 65 lire.! Fra Melano, the Cistercian, was employed at the duomo of Orvieto, in 1271. He was engaged by the Republic of Siena to rebuild the church of S. Cristoforo, in 1291. One Fra Domenico, of the Order of the Umiliati, superintended the building of Castel Paganico, for the same Republic.—Lettere Sanesi, &c. Lett. xxiv.

duomo of Siena, and bound himself to complete it in one year, as he did. Hence it follows that Niccola Pisano was at Siena, in the September of 1267. That Guglielmo was present at the foresaid translation is apparent from the concordant testimonies of Leandro Alberti, Melloni, Pio, and Razzi;[1] and though they do not state whether it was at the first or second, it is nevertheless plain that it must have been that of 1267, since Agnelli was not born at the time of the first. Such were the conjectures concerning the date and the author of this work, and they were so near the truth that they amounted almost to a moral certainty. It remained for us to discover some authentic instrument of the period to set the seal of historic truth on the epoch. Having, therefore, applied ourselves to the study of the ancient original chronicle of the convent of S. Catherine in Siena, which does not appear to have been consulted by any one on the subject, it soon appeared that both master and disciple worked at the monument during the time we have indicated.[2]

[1] Alberti De viris illustr. Ord. Præd. Lib. vi., p. 261. Melloni. Vita di S. Domenico. C. xxiii., p. 128. in nota. P. Michele Pio vite degli uomini illustri di S. Domenico. Lib. i., p. 134. P. Serafino Razzi, Vite dei Santi e beati del Sacro ordine dei frati predicatori.

[2] "Hic (fr. Gulielmus) cum beati Dominici corpus sanctissimum in sollempniori tumulo levaretur quem sculpserant (sic) magistri Nicole de Pisis, Policretiori manu, sociatus dicto architettori," &c. I am indebted to Sigre Buonaini for this and other extracts from the Chronicle of the Convent of S. Catherine at Pisa.

CHAPTER VI.

Description of the Arca or shrine of S. Dominic, at Bologna—What part Niccola Pisano and Fra Guglielmo had in its execution—The Sculptors who at various periods were engaged at it.

The monument commonly called the Ark of S. Dominic is, in its total height, from the pavement to the statuette of the Redeemer, which is placed on its summit, six metres and eleven centimetres; its length is two metres and forty-two centimetres; the width of its sides is one metre and twenty-two centimetres. It is composed of three parts; an embasement, the Ark itself properly so-called, and the cover; the entire is of the finest statuary marble. It is isolated in the chapel of the saint, in order that it may be seen on all sides, as it is everywhere adorned by the chisel. Its form, like that of all the sacraphagi of the period, is a right-angled parallelogram. Of the three parts of the monument, Niccola Pisano and Fra Guglielmo sculptured only the Ark, where the relics of the saint repose; the base or gradino having been executed by Alfonso Lombardi of Ferrara; the summit, with some statues that adorn it, by Niccola da Barri, called Niccola "of the urn;" and the two angels on the mensa, one by Michelangelo, and the other by some unknown hand of the fifteenth century. There can be no doubt that Niccola Pisano furnished the design of all the legends on the Ark, and that he undertook to sculpture the front and two of the sides, leaving the other to Fra Guglielmo: for, indeed, it is not very likely that Agnelli, then so very young, would have attempted any other part of the work.

The legends sculptured on the monument form six compartments; two in front, one on either side, and two behind. The figures are in mezzo-relievo, and in height little more than a mezzo-braccio.[1] In the first compartment Niccola sculptured the miracle wrought in Rome by S. Dominic, when he resuscitated the young Napoleone; and in the second, the legend of the fiery ordeal in Languedoc, where the books of the Manicheans were consumed, whilst S. Dominic's remained unscathed. These legends, as far as composition, design, and expression, are concerned, may be pronounced most beautiful, if we take into account the time at which they were produced. In the middle of these two compartments he placed an exquisite statuette of the Madonna, in relievo, holding the Divine Son in her arms; a work that heightens the beauty of this splendid monument. On the side next the Gospel he produced two legends which have been strangely confused by Cicognara. One of these represents the holy Apostles Peter and Paul giving the holy Scriptures to S. Dominic, and commanding him to go and convert sinners and heretics; the other, the holy Founder himself, consigning the sacred volume to his brethren, and commissioning them to preach it everywhere. On the side next the Epistle he sculptured only one legend, which describes how angels provided food for the young brotherhood, at a period when the charity of the faithful waxed cold. The workmanship of these two legends is truly admirable; and, indeed, that of the two angels is of such rare excellence, that no one, who had seen the grotesque sculptures of that age, and the following, could believe it to be a work of the thirteenth century: but

1 The Florentine *braccio* is equal to one foot eleven inches, English measurement.

rather of a period posterior to it; since the design, life-like attitudes and flowing drapery of the figures, announce a wonderful progress in the art. On the angles of the Ark he chiselled the four Doctors of the church: but although they deserve much praise for the style of the heads and elaborate execution, Davia does not think them well proportioned.

The posterior part of the monument, which we think was designed by Niccola, and executed by Fra Guglielmo, in its two compartments presents six legends: three of which relate to the blessed Reginald of Orleans, a disciple of S. Dominic; and three to the holy Founder, and they are the following:—1. The B. Reginald smitten by distemper, and falling into the arms of a youth, who supports him. 2. The Madonna healing the sick man; pointing to the habit of the new Order of Preaching Friars, and commanding him to take it. 3. The same who, holding S. Dominic's hands, is freed from a terrible temptation. This is Davia's interpretation. The second compartment is divided from the first by a beautiful statuette of the Redeemer; which, judging by the design and execution, seems to be the work of Niccola. The fourth legend represents the vision of Pope Honorius III., who dreamed that he saw the Lateran Basilica falling and S. Dominic supporting it. This subject has been badly handled by every painter who undertook to produce it on canvas; and, surely, it must have presented greater difficulties to the sculptor on account of the perspective. The fifth represents Pope Honorius III., examining the Dominican rule and laws; and the sixth, the Pontiff pronouncing his solemn approbation of the same. Every one will perceive at a glance how unhappily the subjects of these six histories were selected, and how little they aided the sculptor's imagination; whereas the life of the

reat patriarch (S. Dominic,) presents the most varied and stounding facts which, like these of the anterior part of the nonument, were far better suited to the development of Niccola's glorious genius, and the execution Fra Guglielmo's chisel. And, in truth, whosoever has seen the splendid paintings by Simone Memmi, in the great chapel of the Spagnuoli, in S. Maria Novella; the most rare productions of Fra Angelico in Cortona and Paris; or even the embasement of the Ark itself, on which Alfonso Lombardi sculptured other scenes of the saint's life, must perceive how unfounded is the criticism of M. Rio, who asserts that the history of S. Dominic does not contribute so much to the poetry of Christian art as does that of S. Francis. He is contradicted, however, by M. Montalembert, who points to the blessed Angelico as demonstrating the falsity of this opinion;[1] and he might have added, that when Dante set about chronicling the glories of S. Dominic, he produced that beautiful twelfth Canto of the Paradiso,[2] than which none is grander or more replete with splendid imagery. But to return to the works of Fra Guglielmo, which we have described. No one will deny that they are, in execution, much inferior to these of Niccola, his master, and that this (Fra Guglielmo's) portion of the monument exhibits many of the defects of the period; for, indeed,

[1] A. F. Rio de la Poesie Chretienne. 1 Vol. Paris, 1837, ch. iii., p. 86. We shall have more than one occasion to speak of the work, that does so much honour to the genius and piety of M. Montalembert, *Du Vandalisme et du Catholocisme dans l'Art*, p. 88. "Et d'ailleurs, comment se fait il que l'Ordre des Freres Precheurs ait produit tant de grand artistes, et du premier rang, tels que Fra Angelico et Fra Bartholommeo, tandis que le nombre de ceux sortis des freres Mineurs est infiniment moindre. Nous avouons que nous sommes jaloux de la moindre parcelle de la gloire de S. Dominique," &c.

[2] See Cantos xi. and xii. (Carey's Translation) of the Paradiso, for a magnificent narrative of the glories of S. Thomas D'Aquino, and S. Dominic.

the members are too rigid, and the extremities are far from being well finished; and, what is still more censurable, the figures crowd too much one on the other. In my judgment, however, these defects should not be attributed to Niccola, or his disciple, but rather to those who desired to have so many legends sculptured within such narrow limits; for, as we have already observed, whilst the anterior part of the Ark has but two legends in two compartments, there are no less than six in the two which fell to the lot of Fra Guglielmo. Despite all this, there is no one who knows anything of the state of Italian sculpture in the middle of the thirteenth century, who will deny that Fra Guglielmo, if he did not equal his master, far excelled all his contemporaries—Arnolfo and Giovanni Pisano excepted.

To these legends which adorn the saint's sepulchral urn, the two artists added an exquisite embellishment of acanthus-leaves and birds, all along the upper cornice, the entire of which composition is admirably designed and executed. These, then, are the works that Agnelli executed in Bologna, under the guidance of Niccola; which being finished, the master returned to his own country, and the disciple, as it is said, remained to witness the final translocation of S. Dominic's relics. And since we have dwelt so long on this subject, we deem it well to narrate the works which various artists, at subsequent periods, produced on the same monument; for, although an account of them does not, of right, pertain to these Memoirs, it cannot be otherwise than agreeable to all amateurs of art, who have not had an opportunity of beholding the Ark, or of reading the valuable notices of it published by the Marquis Davia in Bologna.

It would be idle to assert that Niccola's design has been fully carried out in the sculptures of the legend

already described, as the Ark still needed to have the mbasement adorned, to say nothing of the many other mbellishments which in that age were invariably wrought n the sepulchres of distinguished men; and if any one e anxious to form a notion of the eminent sculptor's ntire design for the Dominican monument, (provided he iad been able to realize it,) he must, in my opinion, call o mind that which Fuccio erected, about this period, in Assisi, to the Queen of Cyprus, (if, indeed, it be Fuccio's,) nd that by Giovanni Pisano to Benedict XI., in Perugia; hat of Guido Tarlati, in Arezzo, a most beautiful work y Agnolo and Agostino of Siena in the fourteenth century; or, what is more to the purpose, the magnificent ltar of the cathedral church of that city, where repose he sacred ashes of the bishop and martyr, S. Donatus, o whom Giovanni Pisano raised a monument, which, if ve except that of S. Augustin in Pavia, has none to urpass or equal it in Italy.[1] All these monuments, and thers of this period, were adorned not only with figures in elievo and mezzo-relievo, but also with architecture; and, ndeed, nothing can exceed the beauty of these elaborate piral columns, springing out of symbolic animals; or that f the little Gothic temples, with mouldings so finely hiselled, and angels on either side drawing the curtains so s to reveal the reclining statue of the saint or hero. The ase also was embellished with arabesques or mosaics; and, inally, the plain, but withal devout and affectionate inscrip-

[1] Cicognara (Storia della Scultura Ital.) ascribes the monument of St. Augustin, at Pavia, to the scholars of Agostino and Agnolo of Siena. It was commenced December 14, 1362. It now lies in a ruinous state in an apartment contiguous to the cathedral. It was in breadth two, in height seven, and length five, braccia. It contained 290 figures in relievo and mezzo-relievo. The workmanship cost the Augustinian Friars 4,000 gold florins.

tion, invited the spectator to pray for the defunct, and warned him of the sure and terrible doom of all mortality. Whether for want of means, or for some other reason unknown to us, S. Dominic's monument remained just as the two Pisan sculptors had left it.[1] Finally, in the year 1469, the Preaching-Friars came to the unanimous determination of finishing the monument in a style worthy of the great Patriarch whose ashes it held. The counsel-book of the convent of S. Dominic in Bologna records how, on the 9th of July of that year, the Fathers made arrangements for the work, and confided it to the eminent sculptor, Niccola di Puglia; and how, on the 10th of August of the same year, they provided the artist with a cell in their convent.[2] As the Friars had not money enough, they applied to the chief magistrates of the city, who, according to Leandro Alberti, having deputed four of their number to hasten the work, voted them the sum of seven hundred gold crowns to enable the foresaid artist to begin immediately.[3] Art, meanwhile, had made such rapid progress, and even taste had been so much improved, that it seemed unwise to finish the monument according to the style and conception of the old masters; wherefore the Fathers resolved to embellish it with all the pure graces of the sculpture of the better era. Niccola devoted four years to the marble cover which was to be

[1] In the fifteenth century the urn of S. Dominic was covered with a board which on festive days was substituted by a cloth of gold.

[2] Lib. Consil. S. D. Bononiæ, ab ann. 1459, p. 19. "July 9th, (1469,) it was decreed that the Ark of St. Dominic, not yet finished, shall be completed by Master Niccola di Puglia," p 20. "August 10, (1469,) decreed that said Master Niccola shall work in the convent."

[3] L. Alberti, de Divi Dom. obitu et sepultura, Bononiæ, 1535. "And having received seven hundred gold crowns, so zealously was the work carried on, that on the 16th of July, A.D. 1473, the marble covering, most ingeniously and elaborately wrought, was placed on the Ark."

placed on the Ark, in lieu of the wooden one; and on the 16th of July, A. D. 1473, though wanting some statues, it was raised to its destination: but we will take the description of it from Davia. "The marble cover, with its elegant and varied curvature, is laid on the upper cornice of the Ark, and is entirely decorated with leaves symmetrically alternated over the whole superficies, from which descend eight large zones, at equal distances, terminating in as many volutes, to serve as bases for eight figures that represent Saints Francis, Petronius, Dominic, Florian, Proculus, John the Baptist, and two other saints whose names I have not been able to discover. (They are the holy Martyrs Vitalis and Agricola.) From the plane of the cover springs an exquisite frieze adorned with seraphims, and crowned by the corresponding cornice most delicately carved, upon the four angles of which stand the figures of as many prophets, and between the two who correspond to the anterior face of the monument, is our Lord coming forth naked from the sepulchre, and adored by two angels. Resting on the cornice of the foresaid frieze there is a quasi-pyramidal elevation, on which is laid a species of candelabrum of most elegant form, sustaining a figure which represents God the Father, having the globe in his left hand, and his right in the act of blessing. From the handles of the candelabrum descend two great festoons of fruits and flowers, beautifully intertwined, against which the angels, standing on the corbels at the foot of the candelabrum, lean, thus giving the two festoons a most graceful curvature, by the pressure of their bodies."[1]

All these adornments and figures are of such exquisite

[1] Memorie Storico-Artistiche, p. 30, 31.

beauty, and so ably elaborated, that Niccola deserved to be called "of the Ark," (Niccola dell'arca) as Jacopo, his master, was called "of the fountain," which he so laudably wrought in his birth-place Siena. For the completion of the rich frieze there yet remained to be executed some statues, which, perhaps, because Niccola had other engagements elsewhere, and died in 1494, could not be placed thereon. Nevertheless, though this omission must have caused regret at the period, it may be said to have heightened the beauty of the monument at a more glorious epoch. For when Piero de Medici was expelled by the Florentines, Michelangiolo Buonarroti, then but twenty years of age, fled with his protector and patron[1] to Venice, and subsequently to Bologna, where, having been kindly received by Giovan Francesco Adovrandi, one of the sixteen then composing the government, he was prevailed upon by the latter to decorate the Dominican urn with his chisel. Some have asserted that he executed four statues; others three; and some mention only two. We will follow the opinion of the learned Vincenzo Vannini, who has studied the question. "There are some historians," says the authority quoted, "who affirm that Michelangiolo sculptured for the Ark of S. Dominic, besides the angel, the statues of S. Petronius, S. Proculus, and S. Francis. But there is authority to prove that he merely executed the drapery of S. Petronius, left unfinished by Niccola da Barri; as to the S. Francis they have little or no proof; and as to S. Proculus there are authentic documents to convince every one that it was executed before Buonarrotti's time."[2] It would appear

[1] V. Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici; and Duppa de Quincy's Life of Michelangiolo.

[2] Buonarrotti's angel on the monument of St. Dominic, illustrated by Pro-

that the angel on the Gospel-side of the altar, was the only work produced here by this great sculptor.[1] By way of contrast to the angel on the Epistle-side, Buonarroti represented *his* kneeling on one knee, in the act of adoration, and holding the candelabrum in his hands. He is clothed in a flowing tunic, admirably draped, and so beauteous is the countenance—so radiant with devotion—that one might mistake it for a denizen of heaven worshipping on earth. The other statues were, doubtless, the work of Gerolamo Coltellini, a Bolognese of the sixteenth century, and an artist of rare merit.

But although the Ark of S. Dominic had received some of the most glorious embellishments of art, and none in Italy could surpass it, nevertheless, considered in its ensemble, it was easy to see that it wanted an elevation, which would render the monument better proportioned in its parts, and make it appear more graceful to the eye. To effect this the embasement was necessary, and this, too, required additional decorations. For this we are indebted to Leandro Alberti a Bolognese, and a religious of the Preaching-Friars, whose earnest entreaties induced Antonio Marsigli Gonfaloniere (di Giustizia) to obtain from the Senate of Bologna a grant which would enable the convent to provide a marble base for the monument, and have it sculptured with histories by Alfonso Lom-

fessor Vinc. Vannini. Bologna, 1840. We are rejoiced to learn that this distinguished architect has been collecting materials, hitherto unpublished, to illustrate the magnificent chapel of the Ark. I gladly seize this opportunity to attest my gratitude for the notices he has given me of some of the Dominican artists.

[1] Condivi, who attributes two statues to him, *i. e.* S. Petronius and the angel, writes that he received for the former twelve ducats, and for the latter eighteen. He adds, that he would have executed others had he not been deterred by the threats of a Bolognese sculptor, who had conceived the design of producing them. Vita di Michelangelo.

bardi of Ferrara. The sum granted did not exceed a hundred gold crowns, Alberti and the brotherhood having supplied the remainder. The histories were to be executed in basso-relievo; and the contract with the artist is dated November 20, 1532. Having set to work, Alfonso divided the frieze of the base into five compartments of unequal proportions, on the four smallest of which he wrought scenes from the life of the saint, introducing into the centre compartment (which was the largest) a passage out of the New Testament, namely—the Adoration of the Magi. The first compartment represents some beautiful scenes relating to the Saint's birth. The second exhibits the saint while yet a child, sleeping on the ground, after having abandoned his bed. The third contains two histories, or rather the same idea at two different epochs. There was a famine in the city of Palenza, and the wealthy, far from succouring the poor, affected ignorance of their condition. The young Guzman, having first given all that he possessed, finally sold the books which were necessary for his philosophical and theological studies. And here Lombardi pourtrays a usurer who cautiously counts out the money to the saint, who gives it to the crowd of starvelings and cripples that surrounds him. Finally, he sculptured the transit of S. Dominic, and the angels conducting his blessed soul to heaven. We should be too prolix were we to dwell on all the beauties of these splendid decorations. They must be seen in order to estimate the ability of Lombardi—ability which induced Michelangiolo to call him to his assistance when he was casting the bronze statue of Julius II., in Bologna.[1] The wonder really is how, in

[1] This statue was cast in 1506. Buonarrotti having asked Julius what he would place in the right hand, which was in a threatening attitude, was

such narrow compass, (the figures being only one-fourth of a Bolognese braccio in height,) he could exhibit such admirable composition, such exquisite workmanship, and such good design. Rightly has Cicognara remarked, "if we except the dimensions, every thing is grand in these wonderful sculptures."[1] Thus, after the lapse of three centuries, Italian sculpture strewed its choicest flowers on the sepulchre of that great man, who despising pomp and the fleeting pleasures of the age, became voluntarily poor and followed Christ over the thorny road of humiliations and sorrows. To him not only Italy, but Europe, in a great measure, owes the preservation of the Catholic faith, and the advancement of science, letters, and arts.

told by his holiness to put a sword in it as he was no book-man. V. Duppa's Life of Angelo, p. 37. Bogue's edition.

[1] L. Alberti, de divi Dom. ob. et sepult. "Quin et anno 1532, basim marmoream minutissimis figuris insculptam ab Alfonso Lombardo egregio statuario poni jussit (*i. e.* Sen. Bonon.) pro qua aureos centum, curante Leandro Alberto Bonon. et Ant. Marsilio vixillefero justitiæ ad senatum referente, et ipse senatus, videlicet xl. viri, ex publico erario decrevit. Unum dixerim, absit invidia verbo, me quamplurima nobilissima sepulcra ex argento, atque ex lapidibus, ex ære, diducta vidisse, non solum per Italiam, quam totam peragravi, prout in geographia ac typographia ipsius Italiæ ostendi, sed etiam per Germaniam Galliasque, et adhuc non solum superius ullum hoc sanctissimo sepulcro, sed nec par vidi." The notices of the translation of St. Dominic's remains, his sepulchre, church, &c., are most copiously given in his life, written by F. Melloni, vol. V., c. 23. As the anterior part of the mensa remained to be decorated, some of the religious of the convent, in the last century, entrusted the work to Bolognese and extern artists. Mauro Tesi furnished the design; and Carlo Bianconi executed the history representing the burial of St. Dominic. Alessandro Savolini sculptured the frieze and its decorations; and Jean Boudard of France, director of the School of Sculpture in Parma, did the rest. These works are not devoid of merit.

CHAPTER VII.

Continuation of the Life of Fra Guglielmo da Pisa—His works in the Duomo of Orvieto, and in his own country—His death.

Having now said all that was necessary of the Ark of S. Dominic, we resume the life of Fra Guglielmo. The biographers of the Order, and the Chronicles of the Convent of S. Catherine of Pisa, which are so silent in many particulars concerning this man, furnish us with an anecdote which we will briefly narrate. The 5th of June, A.D. 1267, was the day appointed for the solemn translocation of the body of S. Dominic to the urn recently sculptured by the two Pisan artists. To prevent every pious theft, the General of the Preaching-Friars, having obtained faculties from the Pope, pronounced sentence of excommunication against any one who would dare to appropriate any portion of the sacred relics. The good Fra Guglielmo, forgetful of the sentence, contrived to carry off a rib of the saint, which he conveyed to Pisa, and hid under the altar of S. Mary Magdalen, in the church of his institute; deeming himself thus adequately remunerated for all the labour he expended on the decoration of the sepulchre in Bologna: and never did he reveal that theft till his last moments, when he had no longer any reason to dread the indignation of the General of the Order. Now, following up the narrative of the works which he executed in his own country and elsewhere, we must refute a conjecture of F. Guglielmo della Valle, who fancied that Niccola Pisano, after setting out from Bologna for Siena, to execute the splendid pulpit of the cathedral, conjointly with Arnolfo and Lapo, brought with him his son Giovanni, and Agnelli; for it appeared to the learned

Franciscan that in the very short time allowed by the contract, Niccola could not have completed that immense work, if not assisted by more than his two scholars. But this opinion is not maintainable, as it is proved that whilst Niccola was engaged on the Sienese pulpit, Fra Guglielmo was living in Bologna. This was precisely in the middle of the year 1267.

Here we have an immense blank in the history of Agnelli, for which we can only account by attributing it to the modesty and humility of the ancients, who were far more intent on spending their lives in good and pious works, than in writing or proclaiming them; unlike the men of our day, who abound more in words than in works. It is not likely, however, though it would appear so from the chronicle, that an artist of Agnelli's merit would have remained idle for twenty-six years; or that he would not have been invited along with the foremost sculptors of the time to work in Orvieto, at these bassi-relievi, which still excite the admiration of every beholder. Every body knows that denser darkness shrouds the life and works of other eminent sculptors, at periods not so remote from our times; as for example, that of Niccolo da Barri and Gerolamo Coltellini, who worked at the Ark of Dominic. This, indeed, was the most glorious epoch of Fra Guglielmo's life; when advanced in years and matured in genius, he could divide the aurels with Arnolfo, and add an additional triumph to Italian sculpture. We will now premise some notices which are necessary for the illustration of Agnelli's life, and the works which he produced.

The enthusiasm of all the Italian cities for art, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, partakes of the miraculous. Venice, Pisa, and Monte Cassino, had given the impulse; Siena followed it, and raised its magnificent cathedral. Florence charged Arnolfo to erect a temple

worthy a people famed for arts, letters, and commerce. Assisi, Padua, and Bologna, emulated the other cities. All of them, with the exception of Assisi, were rich: but it excited astonishment to see the little city of Orvieto rivalling with its cathedral the most splendid edifices of Italy; nor need I insist that the far-famed duomo not only equals, but surpasses that of Siena. Glorious monument of Italian genius; true emporium of the arts; rich in the sculptures of Arnolfo, of Fra Guglielmo, Agostino, and Agnolo of Siena—of Goro, Gregorio the Sienese, Donatello, Simone Mosca, Raffaello di Monte Lupo, Ippolito Scalza, the pupil of Buonarroti; of Caccini, and Giovanni di Bologna! Glorious monument, indeed, consecrated by the pencils of Gentile da Fabriano, Giovanni the angelic, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Luca Signorelli; temple raised not by the gold of princes, but by the oboli of *the poor!* [1]

The foundations of this cathedral were laid A. D. 1290. The first stone was blessed by Pope Nicholas IV., on the 13th of November. Lorenzo Maitani furnished the design, and was appointed architect and chief superintendent of the works. To make this temple surpass every other in every department of the arts, the ablest professors were invited from all parts of Italy. Thither came forty artists, amongst whom, excelling all the rest, were Arnolfo, the Cosmati of Rome, Ramo Paganello, and probably Giovanni Pisano.[2] Fra Guglielmo is recorded as having been engaged at the works in 1293; and he laboured in the quarter provided for the sculptors and stone-masons. We have not learned how long he remained in Orvieto.

[1] F. Guglielmo della Valle wrote a history of the duomo of Orvieto, published 1791.

[2] Storia del duomo di Orvieto. Docum. No. 11, p. 263. The chief sculptors received six soldi per diem; the apprentices two. Niccola Pisano, whilst working in Siena, received eight soldi per diem!

Arnolfo must have left it at the beginning of the year 1294; for at that period S. Croce in Florence was begun after his designs, and four years afterwards S. Maria del Fiore.[1] The departure of this sculptor and architect from Orvieto being fully ascertained, and the date of Giovanni Pisano's arrival remaining still doubtful, gives us reason to believe that the bassi-relievi must, in great part, be attributed to Agnelli. Of all the Germans mentioned by Vasari as having been engaged sculpturing marbles for this church, the Memoirs record but one German and one Fleming. For a long time it was thought that the most exquisite of the foresaid bassi-relievi were produced by Niccola and Giovanni Pisano. Vasari asserted it, and it was universally repeated. F. della Valle, after making a diligent examination of the archives of the church, found no record of either of these sculptors; nevertheless, and it is a fact worthy consideration, he placed Niccola foremost amongst all those who worked at the duomo. As to his son Giovanni, it is probable that he was employed there, but we lack authentic documents to prove it. Cicognara has shown that Niccola Pisano was born in the thirteenth century; remarking, at the same time, that if the sculptures on the façade were contemporaneous with the foundation of the duomo, (A. D. 1290,) Niccola should have been a nonogenarian, a time of life which must have rendered him incapable of undertaking such a work.[2] If Vasari were not in the habit of contradicting himself, I think that we could easily learn from him the date of Niccola's death, and the solution of the doubt. Narrating the life of his son Giovanni, he writes, "having heard that Niccola, his father, was dead, he went to Pisa, where his great merits caused the whole city to receive him

[1] In 1280 Arnolfo produced the monument of Card. Brayo in Orvieto.

[2] Storia della Scultura. L. ii., c. 4.

with much honour," etc., and having seen some of his works, "the Pisans employed Giovanni to construct the Campo Santo." From all this it appears that when Giovanni undertook the works of the Campo Santo, his father was defunct. Now that fabric was begun in 1278; that is to say, twelve years before the first stone of the cathedral of Orvieto was laid. Thus, admitting the truth of Vasari's statement, every doubt vanishes. F. della Valle saw the difficulty of the chronology; but it would appear that he set no great value on it, since he asserts, with a marvellous indifference, that, "*fully seventy years before, (the foundation of the duomo,) Niccola Pisano enjoyed the reputation of a most excellent artist, having produced the Sepulchre of S. Dominic in Bologna, and various pulpits in Tuscany !*"[1] Subsequently, however, after more mature consideration, he abandons certainty for doubt, and adds, "*This dearth of data has often made me doubt whether I should believe Vasari, who attributes the finest of the bassi-relievi of the facade to Giovanni Pisano: for as the history of art in the thirteenth century does not present any artist equal to him, and as Arnolfo, then living, was one of the most distinguished and ablest of the scholars whom he was in the habit of associating with himself in the execution of the many works then confided to him in the chief cities of Italy, I incline to think that Vasari's opinion is the least erroneous;*"[2] but I think I have discovered what led Vasari into this error, and F. della Valle himself rectifies it in his "Documents relative to the Artists of the Fifteenth Century." (V. No. 70.) The historian says, "Here we find a certain Niccola di Pisa, with his son, an able sculptor, and probably nephew (after two hundred years!) of that other celebrated man

[1] Storia del duomo di Orvieto. Docum. xii.

[2] Ibid, c. i., p. 99,

who flourished about the end of the thirteenth century; and who executed the most beautiful of the bassi-relievi of the façade, as has been already said." From this it appears that Vasari or his correspondents who, it must be confessed, did not care much for accuracy, finding in the ancient memoirs a certain Niccola Pisano with his son employed at sculpture in Orvieto, were led into error by the similarity of name, country, and profession.

The history, therefore, of the Cathedral of Orvieto, does not inform us to whom we should attribute the principal part of these sculptures; and our Fra Guglielmo is barely mentioned in a note, as our author had forgotten how much praise he had bestowed on him in a letter dated June 3rd, 1787, addressed to Alessandro da Morrona, and inserted in the work entitled, "Pisa Illustrata."[1]

The bassi-relievi which adorn the façade of the cathedral of Orvieto comprise histories of the Old and New Testament, the most beautiful of which are engraved in fourteen plates, given with F. della Valle's work; and they are the following. The Creation of the animals, which is contained in two bassi-relievi; that of man and of the woman being represented in three: the Command not to eat of the "TREE," and the Disobedience of our first parents; the penalty of their sin, and their expulsion from Eden; Adam and Eve in exile experiencing the ills of life; the Sacrifice of Cain and Abel—the first Fratricide—and, transporting the spectator from the genesis of the world

[1] "What will you think of another Pisan sculptor, Fra Guglielmo, of the Order of St. Dominic, who was equal to him (Niccola Pisano) in producing these living histories, (of the duomo of Orvieto.) I have been lately feeding my eyes on them, and they so affected me that I stood before them mute and immovable as the marble. . . . . I hold for certain that up to the times of Raffaello art never beheld such beauteous productions."

to its destruction, they exhibit the general Resurrection on the last day, the agonies of the damned, and the glories of the elect. Wonderful epic, in which the mind, crossing over the gulf of time, pauses to meditate how the human family has passed from innocence to guilt, and to everlasting pains and glories! In that age of faith the Italians were ever anxious to have before their eyes and present to their thoughts the foundations of their hopes and fears, and it was to the incarnation of these sublime conceptions that the painter and the sculptor consecrated the pencil and the chisel, the poet his immortal lay, and the melodist the sweetest strains of his lyre. Dante, Niccola Pisano, or Giotto, could produce nothing half so well calculated to stimulate genius as the dogma of Life and Death. Hence the very pastimes of the Italians were impressed with a Religious character; for, indeed, it was Religion that blessed and sanctified sciences, arts, arms, and literature.

Cicognara's strictures on the bassi-relievi of the façade of Orvieto appear to us too severe; and perhaps he did not reflect that he should not have contrasted them with these of the pulpits of Pisa and Siena, or with the histories on S. Dominic's monument in Bologna; since the latter were wrought for close inspection, and therefore executed with consummate diligence; whereas these of the façade of the duomo of Orvieto, being at a very great elevation, and exposed to all the injuries of the weather, did not afford the same advantages for the patient labour of the artists. This doubtless damaged their general effect. Certain it is that none of Niccola's scholars could rival him in giving marble such life-like shape; but none can deny that some of the bassi-relievi of Orvieto are singularly beautiful, such, for example, as the creation of Adam and Eve, the sacrifice of Abel, our progenitors tilling the soil, &c. And if

amongst them there be some which may be termed inferior, such as the Eternal cursing the prevaricators, the pains of the damned, &c.; the multiplicity of artists, all of whom were not equal in power, will satisfactorily account for all their defects and contrasts. But, generally speaking, the nude is well drawn, many of the difficulties of design are mastered, and the conception is admirably expressed; nor do I fear to assert that that age exhibits no greater work, except these of Niccola Pisano.

How long Agnelli tarried in Orvieto is not certain; but in 1304 we find him in his own country, engaged on important works of sculpture and architecture; and this is the reason why he was not invited by Cardinal Niccolo Albertino, the Dominican, to Perugia, to sculpture the sepulchral monument of Benedict XI., (of the same Order,) who died July 27, A.D. 1304. In his place Giovanni Pisano was chosen, and he executed the monument admirably.

The Camaldolese monks of Pisa, wishing to finish the Church of S. Michele di Borgo, and to decorate its façade with histories in basso-relievo, invited Fra Guglielmo, who was now famed for these of Orvieto. The church and monastery of S. Michele, in Borgo, were founded in 1018. Vasari affirms, and he is supported by Alessandro da Morrona, that in 1262, Niccolo Pisano was employed there, either as an architect or sculptor.[1] In fact, that church must have been, if not wholly, in great part rebuilt; since we read how in 1304, the Abbot Andrea di Volterra, caused our Fra Guglielmo to finish the façade, roof, and part of the church. These works of architecture and sculpture occupied, as it appears, the remaining nine

[1] Pisa Illustrata. Vol. III., p. 1, c. vi. sec. 2.

years of Agnelli's life. It is not very probable, however, that he alone sculptured all the histories at this advanced age, (he had passed his sixtieth year,) and the diversity of their merit, according to Morrona, announces a diversity of workmanship. I cannot, however, agree with the learned illustrator of Pisa, who says that among those who laboured with Agnelli was Giovanni Pisano, whose then renowned-name would not have been suppressed in the inscription that records the authors of the bassi-relievi. And, in truth, Giovanni had too many commissions on hands to allow him to associate himself with Agnelli; and, moreover, he must have remained a very long time in Perugia, with the Dominicans, for whom, after finishing the monument to Benedict XI., and that to Guidalotti, the Founder of the University of Perugia, he reconstructed the centre aisle of their church according to his own design. While Fra Guglielmo was engaged at the building of S. Michele in Borgo, and sculpturing marbles for the same, he was charged to construct a pulpit, like these of Siena, Pisa, and Pistoja; and following the traces of Niccola, he in a very short time completed it. But the barbarity of the times, called civilized, destroyed the work of the Pisan Friar, together with the histories on the façade as well as these of the pulpit: at the present day but eight of them remain. They have been transferred to the cathedral, and are placed partly under the choir, and partly over the doors of the two sacristies.

These works completed, to the satisfaction of the monks and the glory of the artist, it was resolved to perpetuate his memory in an inscription now destroyed, but preserved by Father Grandi in his "Epistola de Pandectis," as may be seen in Moronna's work on Pisa. This inscription stamps Fra Guglielmo as the author of these works; and

corrects all the historians who assert that he died in 1312. Paoli Tronci, Pio, and Morrona himself, who give the inscription, had all the facilities for fixing the date;[1] as the verse "Milleno trecento tres dato deno" clearly means 1313; and the first year of the reign of Henry VII., recorded on the inscription, manifestly indicates 1313; for although he received the iron crown at Milan, January 6, 1311, it was not till the year following that he was crowned with the imperial crown at Rome. Counting the years from the time of his coronation at Rome, he had reigned one year, one month, and twenty-five days. In a word, as it has been said, Fra Guglielmo Agnelli followed him, according to Pio, in his ninetieth year; but, more probably in his seventieth, after having spent forty-six years in his institute, as we read in the Chronicle of the convent of S. Catherine at Pisa.[2]

Fra Guglielmo deserves to be ranked amongst the grandest of Italian sculptors, by reason of the many and important works which he executed in his own country, in Bologna, and Orvieto. But as it has fared with other artists, others reaped the glory of his labours. We should not wonder, then, if Cicognara only mentions him in a note to his history;[3] but it is inconceivable how Morrona, who was the first to collect notices of his life and works, did not consult, as he might, the Chronicle of S. Cathe-

[1] See document No. 2, in the appendix of this volume.

[2] See document No. 3, at the end of this volume.

[3] Storia della Scultura. Vol. III., lib. iii., c. vi. "We have also an inscription to the memory of Fra Guglielmo, a Dominican architect and sculptor, who is mentioned by the Abbot Grandi, a Camaldolese, in his "Epist. de Pandectis." Leandro Alberti calls him "Optimus lapidum sculptor." This friar, mentioned by Morrona, died in 1312, and he might have been living at the time of this building, (S. Maria Novella,) or about the time of its completion. Henry II. died at Buonconvento, near Siena, August 24, 1313.

rine, which must have certified him of the share which Agnelli had in the sculptures of S. Dominic's shrine in Bologna.[1] We think we have said enough of his fame as an artist and religious; and we will barely add that, probably, his disciple in the art was a certain Fra Fazio, a lay-brother of the convent of S. Catherine of Pisa, whom the chronicle calls "Magister Sculpturæ." He, in all likelihood, aided Agnelli in his many works, but we have no remain of him save the brief entry which the chronicler makes of his piety and death, which occurred A.D. 1340.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bolognese and Lombard Architects—Their buildings in Venice, in Padua, in Trevigi, in Milan.

We have often lamented the ungrateful silence of the historians who have consigned artists of ability to undeserved oblivion; and the destruction of ancient records in days not very remote from our own, when the peaceful inhabitants of the cloister being dispersed, their libraries and archives were ruthlessly plundered. And we have to regret, likewise, that we have been unable to undertake long journeys in pursuing our researches, as was required of us, in order to illustrate still more copiously the subject-matter of these volumes.

The Dominican architects erected three magnificent temples in the States of the Venetian Republic, and such as may well bear comparison with the most

1 See document 4.

splendid in Italy. However, as we are not able to determine the names of the architects, we must rely altogether on strong conjectures. The following are the churches: S. Giovanni and Paolo in Venice, S. Agostino in Padua, and S. Niccola in Trevigi.[1] We will say only a few words regarding the two former, that we may be enabled to dwell at greater length on the third.

The Preaching-Friars must have arrived simultaneously in Padua and Venice. In this latter city they had been preceded by their holy Founder, A.D. 1221. Their first abode, probably, was the house of some private citizen, or the public hospitals, as it happened to them when they appeared in Siena, Florence, and Milan. According to the chronicle of Andrea Dandolo, in the sixth year of Giacomo Tiepolo's dogato, the Dominicans were so celebrated for their preaching, (ex laudatione publicæ concionis,) that they obtained from the said Tiepolo a piece of marshy ground on the confines of S. Maria Formosa and S. Marina, and there built their church and convent.[2] The sixth year of the dogato of Giacomo Tiepolo, according to the chronology of F. Bernardo de Rubeis, was the year of our Lord 1234.[3] I will not admit, however, that the Dominicans remained so long in Venice without erecting a convent; since it is only reasonable to conjecture that on the ground granted by the Doge they would have built a larger and more regular edifice. In this opinion we are sustained by De Rubeis, who, on the authority of Ferdinando Ughelli,

[1] It is probable that the church of S. Anastasia in Verona, and the convent of the Preaching-Friars may have been erected by architects of the Order, but we lack documents to prove it.

[2] Lib. x. c. v. p. xiii. v. Rev. Italic. Script. v. xii.

[3] De rebus. Congregat. B. Jacopi. Salom. in Prov. S. Dom. Venetiarum erectæ. Comment. Hist. auct. F. J. Franc. Bernardo de Rubeis Venetiis, 1751, one vol. in 4to. c. ii. p. 88.

quotes a valuable document, which induces us to believe that they might have had a hospice in Venice and Padua as early as 1226. This very ancient memoir tells how Giordano da Modena, bishop of Padua, at the supplication of Fra Guidone, prior of the Dominicans of Padua, and of Fra Martino, prior in Venice, blessed the first stone of the new church which they determined to raise at Padua, under the invocation of S. Augustin. This must have been on the 5th of October of the year 1227. (De Rubeis reads 1226.) The document cited, therefore, clearly shows that there was a community of Dominicans in the cities of Venice and Padua in that year, and that Fra Martino and Fra Guidone were the superiors.[1]

On more than one occasion we have adverted to the activity and enthusiasm of the Italians and ultramontanes in erecting gorgeous churches during this wonderful thirteenth century; and showed how the new Orders vied with each other in the magnificence of cloisters and temples, notwithstanding the rule of poverty which they professed and followed. Venice now exemplifies this. The Franciscans had commenced a splendid church, after the design of Niccola Pisano: and the Dominicans, not satisfied with the narrow limits of a small oratory, began theirs, which, on account of the similiarity of architecture, Cicognara believes to have been planned by the same artist. But Vasari, who, in the life of Niccola Pisano, attributes to him the church of the Frari, is silent regarding S. Giovanni and Paolo. The learned Illustrator of the most conspicuous buildings in Venice observes "we have nothing to oppose to this conjecture, (Cicognara's,) for, although we may lack irrefragable evidence

[1] Italia Sacra, vol. v. p. 444. De Rubeis, loc. cit. c. ii. p. 68.

ve can easily believe that, as the Dominicans commonly ad architects in their communities, it is likely they would ave had recourse to some member of their brother- ood."[1] We cannot but admire the caution of these riters who, in the absence of authentic documents, did ot pronounce definitively. In the very important work y M. l'Abbè Bourassè, on the monuments of the middle ges, the following words may be found in the Appen- ix:—"The church di S. Giovanni and Paolo com- enced A.D. 1246, and, not finished in 1390, was con- tructed by the Dominicans, whose architects followed ne style, while the Franciscans adopted another."[2] It ould be desirable to learn where the author came by uch information, and what constituted the styles fol- owed by the Dominicans and Franciscans. The Fran- iscan Order, which, in the magnificence of its temples, ery often equals and surpasses every other, either for ant of architects, or, being desirous to avail themselves f extern talent, neither in the thirteenth nor fourteenth entury, as far as I can learn, employed any architect *of heir own body* to erect any edifice of importance. The hurch of Assisi, if Vasari tells truth, was designed by acopo the German; and Fra Filippo da Campello did othing more than superintend the works. S. Croce in lorence had for its architect the celebrated Arnolfo; and . Antonio in Padua, and the Frari in Venice, Niccola isano. Hence, the difficulty of determining what style he Franciscans followed at this period in building their hurches. But to return to S. Giovanni and Paolo, it is ndubitable that it was begun in 1246, since it appears, y a Bull of Innocent IV. issued on the 10th of July

[1] Fabriche piu conspicue di Venezia, 2 vol. in fol.
[2] Archeologie Chretienne.

of that year, that an indulgence was granted to all those who would contribute to the building of the church of the Dominicans.[1] All my endeavours to ascertain the name of the architect, have been unavailing; and although it would appear probable, that he belonged to the Order, which, at that period, had abundance of architects and sculptors, nevertheless, in the absence of documents, I would not venture to affirm it. For want of funds, the works were suspended, and proceeded so slowly, that, in the year 1395, only the upper half was finished. From a letter of the Ven. F. Raimundo da Capua, Master-general of the Order, dated Palermo March 26, 1395, it appears that, after the reformation of the convents in the Venetian States, (for, indeed, the said convents, owing to the pestilence and schism, had fallen away from their ancient observances,) the people contributed very considerable sums to restore the old monasteries and build new ones. Wherefore, at this period, precisely twenty-thousand florins were collected to complete the magnificent temple of S. Giovanni and Paolo. Fra Antonio da Siena affirms that this money served to finish the under half of said church, the chapel of S. Dominic, and the campanile, (belfry,) which so resembles that of the Franciscans.[2] From all this it is manifest, that if Niccola Pisano furnished the design of S. Giovanni and Paolo, as Cicognara thinks, he must have seen but a small portion of it completed. But, in the works carried on in the fourteenth century, there can be no doubt, (according to Ghirardacci and Petrogalli,) that Niccola da Imola, or Fra Benvenuto da Bologna, both lay-brothers of the Dominicans, and most skilled in the art, were the architects employed. These men, also, for

[1] Bullarium Ord. Præd. v. i. p. 166.

[2] De Rubeis, Loc. cit, ch. i. v. p. 26.

some time, conducted the building of S. Agostino in Padua, and S. Niccolo in Trevigi.[1]

The church of S. Giovanni and Paolo at Venice, according to Cicognara,[2] is "most rich in everything that is precious, and may be styled the Pantheon of Venetian art, particularly since all the great monuments of sculpture and painting, that were well nigh perishing in the demolition of the other churches of the city, have been transferred to it."

Of the church of S. Augustin in Padua, so magnificent for its pictures and marbles, we have little to say, since it was utterly ruined in 1822. Suffice it to observe that it was begun in 1226, and finished in 1303, under the direction of Fra Benvenuto, a Bolognese architect. We prefer dwelling at considerable length on the church of S. Niccolo in Trevigi, as the notices relating to it are very copious.

The consolation which the newly-instituted Mendicant Orders gave to the people in these days of civil strifes, and the barriers they opposed to the tyranny of their task-masters, justly endeared them to those who heard from their lips the language of peace and mercy. The absolute necessity of having God's holy Gospel preached to them, procured from the inhabitants of Trevigi a warm welcome for S. Dominic's Order in the year 1221. But as the little church given them, when they first

[1] P. Domenico Federici. Mem. Trevigiane Sulle Opere del disegno.

[2] Storia della Scultura, vol. vi. l. vi. c. iv. p. 232. "This beautiful church of the Dominicans is cruciform, and of vast height. The nave and aisles are of five bays; the lantern has a dome; and the eastern face of the transept contains the chancel, between four apsidal chapels."— V. Webb's Continental Ecclesiology. This church contains Tiziano's celebrated picture of the martyrdom of S. Pietro di Verona, which holds the same place in the Venetian School that Raffaello's "Transfiguration" does in the Roman. It was painted before 1537, and S. Pius V. caused Tiziano, when ninety years of age, to repeat it with some modifications.

appeared in the city, could not contain the vast multitudes flocking to the sermons, it was decreed by the State. that one far more spacious should be built from the foundations.[1] This decree found a responsive echo in the hearts of the inhabitants, who gladly made an offer of everything necessary for the work. And surely never was there an apostolate grander or more noble than that of the Franciscans and Preaching-Friars, who, for the benefit of the people of Trevigi, Padua, and Vicenza, raised their voices against that tiger of ferocity and barbarity, Ezelino da Romano, whose memory shall be eternally execrated in every region of Italy.

As the church of S. Maria Novella in Florence marked an epoch of peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, so was that of S. Niccolo in Trevigi a tribute of gratitude which the denizens of the latter place offered to the zealous defenders of their most sacred rights.[2] At length, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, a citizen of Trevigi, and an inmate of this very convent of the Preaching-Friars, famed for his learning and sanctity, was raised to

[1] F. Federici discovered in the archives of the Commune of Trevigi the decree of the city for the building of the church of the Preaching-Friars. It is as follows:—"In the name of Christ. Amen. To the honour of God and all his saints, and for the confirmation of the holy Christian faith, we ordain and decree that the commune of Trevigi erect one church in a convenient spot of the city or suburbs, in which the Friars of S. Dominic's Order may preach and celebrate the divine offices, if it seem good to them to have a convent in the city or suburbs of Trevigi."

[2] Pope Alexander IV. A.D. 1255, sent circular letters to all the bishops and noblemen of the free cities of Lombardy, Emilia, and the Marches of Trevigi, exhorting them to form a crusade against the tyrant Ezelino, and granting them the indulgences formerly given to those who marched to the Holy Land. Every corps of armed men selected a *religious* for its leader, and the Bolognese troops had for their general Fra Giovanni da Vicenza, the same who reconciled the Guelphs and Ghibellines on the plain of Paquara. —See Sismondi's Ital. Repub. Ezelino, or, as he styled himself, "the enemy of God and man," died of wounds received at the battle of Capano, A.D. 1259.

the dignity of the sacred purple; and was subsequently elevated to the Papal Throne, after the death of Boniface VIII. This was Benedict XI. When the tiara was placed on his head, he did not forget his country or his brethren. On the contrary, he determined to adorn his birth-place with new and elegant buildings, and to erect for the Dominicans a magnificent temple and convent, that might equal in beauty those of Venice, Padua, and Verona. Trevigi sent ambassadors to his holiness, who presented to him the plan of the city; and the Dominicans, at the same time, forwarded to him the design of the new church, taken in great part from these of S. Giovanni and Paolo, and S. Agostino. In the midst of their joyful anticipations, premature death deprived the Church of one of its most distinguished Pontiffs, and destroyed all hope of the BUILDINGS; fortunately, however, it did not interfere with the new church of the Dominicans: for, during his Cardinalate, Boccasini[1] bestowed to his brethren twenty-five thousand gold ducats; and, before dying, left in the hands of the Dominican bishops of Mantua and Ferrara a larger sum of forty-eight thousand; with which the church was erected, and the building of the new convent commenced. Although there is no record of the name of the architect who furnished the design, I have no reason to doubt that it was Fra Benvenuto da Bologna, who, in 1303, completed the temple of S. Agostino in Padua; since it is very probable that the Dominicans would not have selected an extern in preference to a distinguished member of their own institute:

His whole posterity was destroyed, that none of his race might survive him; thus forcibly reminding us of Juvenal's dictum:—

"Ad generum Cereris sine cæde et vulnere pauci
Descendunt reges, et sicca morte tiranni."

1 Benedict XI.

and this, in my opinion, is sufficient to confute Federici, who, after examining the ancient memoirs of this convent, and finding that a Franciscan lay-brother, named Fra Benvenuto, was then practising architecture in Trevigi, mistakes him for another Friar of the same name, who was the author of this church, and who, according to Ghirardacci, was a Dominican.[1]

We have not ascertained precisely in what year the sacred edifice was commenced, but it was probably between 1310 and 1315: three years after this latter date, it would appear to have been considerably advanced. It was interrupted, however, by the wars for the space of thirty years, that is, from 1318 to 1348. At this period, the building was resumed under the direction of another Dominican architect, Fra Nicola da Imola, who completed it A.D. 1352. From what has been said hitherto, we may easily perceive how far Cicognara is from the truth, when he asserts, that all the most remarkable edifices raised in Italy in the thirteenth century, should be attributed to Niccola Pisano. Whensoever Cicognara is not able to determine the name of the architect, he is wont to give the glory of the fabric to the great Pisan, and he goes so far as to say, that Nicola furnished the design of the Dominican church at Trevigi, leaving it to be executed by Friar-Architects:[2] but as we have already observed, the celebrated Pisan sculptor and

[1] In Trevigi, as well as throughout all the Venetian States, during the fourteenth century, many of the religious were famous as architects. In 1315, three of them were employed at the works on the river Piave; and at this period flourished Fra Giovanni Agostiniano, architect and engineer of the communes of Bassano, Trevigi, and Padua, in which city he constructed the roof of the hall della Ragione, one of the most singular in Italian architecture. The celebrated saloon of Padua is two hundred and fifty-six feet long, eighty-six wide, and seventy-two high. Milizia terms it the greatest in the world.

[2] Memorie Trevig. v. i., p. ii., p. 174.

rchitect, died in 1278, that is fully thirty-two years before his church was commenced.

" If the church of S. Niccola in Trevigi," says Federici, must yield in vastness to the duomo of Milan, and to hese of Orvieto and Siena—if it be surpassed by S. Maria, Novella in Florence, S. Petronio in Bologna, S. Antonio n Padua, and some others (all works of the same period,) n windows, cornices, columns, and other details, it is not nferior to them in the boldness of its arches, and upper ilasters, nor in its fine chapels, with these exquisite windows which are characterised by simplicity, solidity, nd grandeur. In this church, there is more harmony etween the length, width and height, than is to be found n many others."[1] What occurs to me as most worthy f remark in this church is, that being less in length and width than these of S. Antonio in Padua, and S. Giovanni nd Paolo in Venice, it exceeds them all in the lofti- ess of its vaults, since it is eighty feet higher than S. Anthony's, and eighty-two feet higher than that n Venice, if Federici's measurement be correct. The aid church having been finished in 1352, it was deter- nined that every embellishment of art should be be- towed on it. There was then in that city, a painter, named Tommaso di Modena, an artist of celebrity, if we ake the time into consideration. F. Francesco Massa nvited him to paint the church; and F. Vazzola en- gaged him to produce the histories in the chapter-room. Thus S. Niccola in Trevigi, was, so to say, an image of S. Maria Novella in Florence; so much the more as they were both built by architects of the Dominican Order, both completed at the same time, and decorated simul- aneously, by the best pencils of that age, at the instance

[1] This church is 274 feet in length; and 107 in height.

of Friars who cherished the profoundest veneration for art.

The pictures that adorn the Trevigian church, must have been executed between 1353 and 1354. In the fourteenth century, as we have already observed, it was usual to decorate the walls of the church with histories, either sculptured in marble, or painted in fresco, of the principal facts of the Old and New Testament, in order that wheresoever the eye rested, whether on the coloured glass of the windows, or on the ceiling of the holy edifice, it might there find a solemn record, or a solemn lesson, moral, civil, and religious. Tommaso di Modena, who in all probability, did not possess the fecundity of Gaddi, Memmi or Spinello, contented himself with a legendary ichonography, and painted the images of a great number of the saints of various periods, on and over the arches, together with these symbols so dear to the piety of the faithful. Many of these paintings no longer exist, as they were destroyed in 1400, to make way for the restorations and alterations in the church. Federici writes profusely on the merit of these pictures, and their signification. The religious of the convent, to attest their gratitude to F. Massa, who at his own expense, caused the paintings to be executed, raised a marble monument to his memory. But of far greater importance to the history of the Order, were the paintings which the said Tommaso di Modena, executed in the chapter-room of the same convent, in 1352; as they form an historical gallery of all the most distinguished Dominicans, who, up to that year, either by sanctity of life or great learning, had reflected lustre on their institute. There you may behold the series of all the Generals and Cardinals of the Order; and on the friezes you see described the number of the provinces, and that of the convents of the province of lower Lom-

bardy to which the Trevigian convent belonged. Rightly has Frederici called these paintings a "Sacred, Literary, and Political history of the Order of Preaching-Friars in the first century of their institution." It is very likely that Fra Giovanni Angelico, when painting a much smaller, but similar gallery in the chapter-room of the convent of S. Marco, availed himself of that of Trevigi, since Federici who saw both, found many points of resemblance between them. Moreover, Giorgio Vasari, writes, that Fra Giovanni Angelico, was assisted by the Friars, who procuring portraits from many places for him, enabled him to execute likenesses after nature; much merit is due to Father Federici, who by illustrating these pictures and causing them to be engraved, has rendered valuable service to the history of art, and his institute; since anterior to his time, they were all but unknown.[1]

Here terminate the notices relating to the church of S. Niccolo di Trevigi, and its architects, Fra Benvenuto da Bologna and Fra Niccolo da Imola. Of the first we may add, that we find him (A.D. 1314) in his own country, employed by the magistracy of that city, together with other engineers, in a work of great importance. The canal between Bologna and Ferrara being choked up, so as to impede commerce and all communication between the two cities, Fra Benvenuto, and the other engineers, were charged to remedy this great inconvenience. This they effected by deepening the bed of the river, taking five feet from either bank, and turning the water into the Caradiccio, or Grossetta, the canal that communicates with Ravenna. This work cost

[1] Lanzi who knew them only from the engravings published by Federici, mentions them in his history of painting, in the first epoch of the Modenese school.

the city of Bologna over 5,000 lire.[1] More of him we have not been able to learn. We cherish a hope, however, that public and private archives may yet reveal more of the life and works of these two illustrious Dominican architects.

Before closing the Trevigian notices, we will mention a fact recorded by Federici, which plainly shows how much the religious of that convent loved everything connected with art. In the private archives of S. Niccolo, Federici discovered a document, signed by Father Masa, and dated A.D. 1347, by virtue of which the said father bequeathed to the convent of Trevigi a precious collection of objects connected with the fine arts, which he acquired with great labour and expense. Amongst these were miniatured books, painted images, precious vases, crystals, corals, cameos, a Madonna in alabaster and another in ivory; to these he added a collection of poetical, historical, and philosophical works. This we have thought worth recording, since at that period few cities of Italy, and very few of the princes of the land, could boast of such an abundance of books or objects connected with the fine arts. Even this may disabuse some persons, who fancy that the friars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were so infatuated by mystic and scholastic theology, as to set no value on other and less sombre studies.

Having spoken of the Bolognese architects, it is time to turn to those of Lombardy. And here again we have to lament the paucity of our notices. Our sorrow is increased, when we reflect that towards the close of the fourteenth century, there lived in Milan an architect of the Dominican Order, who deserved to be chronicled by

[1] Padre Cherubino Ghirardacci, Agostin. Historia di Bologna, 2 vol. in folio. Bologna: v. vol. ii. lib. 17, p. 573.

the historians of art. Some one has called the middle ages the epoch of great anonymous celebrities; and, indeed, with truth, since at no other period do we find such wonderful activity, or so much anxiety to hide great names.

Ticozzi, in his Dictionary, and Cicognara, in the History of Sculpture, make honourable mention of two Friar-architects, the one belonging to the Franciscan, and the other to S. Dominic's Order, who, when the Duomo of Milan was commenced, were invited to assist at the works, with many other engineers and architects, Italian and ultramontane.[1] These were Fra Giovanni da Giussano, a Dominican, and Fra Andreolo de Ferrari, a Franciscan. But it would be useless to seek in the volumes of Ticozzi or Cicognara, for any notice of the works or life of these two religious; nay, even Milizia, who undertook to write the lives of the most distinguished architects, says nothing of them. They barely tell us that, in 1390, they were both in Milan, engaged at the erection of the duomo. Duke Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti laid the foundation-stone of this grand edifice, in the year 1386; but not satisfied with the works executed in a few months, they were destroyed, and another building was commenced in the October of 1387. Visconti very unwisely had invited a great number of architects from various countries, who, instead of forwarding the work, retarded it most considerably. Differences of opinion, rivalries, and ill-will interrupted it at every stage. This, however, served to exhibit the capabilities of the two architects; since Fra Andreolo and Fra Giovanni were appointed to decide between the rival builders and engineers, who submitted their case to their judgment. This is all that is recorded of them by

[1] Storia della Scultura, Vol. III., lib. iii., cap. i.

Ticozzi and Cicognara. Nevertheless, I think it likely that Fra Giovanni may have directed the building of the church and convent of S. Eustorgio at Milan, which, about this period, were very considerably enlarged.

In fact, the Preaching-Friars must have availed themselves of the services of a member of their own Order to decorate their own church; and it is only reasonable to suppose that they would not have preferred an extern. I should not, however, forget to remark, that Michele Caffi, who has recently published a work on the church of S. Eustorgio, makes no mention of Fra Giovanni da Giussano; but this may be attributed to the want of documents, and every one knows how careless the old chroniclers were in this particular. Neither shall I go beyond the confines of simple conjecture.

In the year 1218, the city of Milan received a colony of Preaching-Friars, sent thither by their holy Founder. They were twelve in number; and here, as in Florence, their first abode was the public hospital of the Pellegrini, or S. Barnabas. In 1220, they began to officiate in the church of S. Eustorgio; and, in 1227, they took possession of it. In Florence they commenced their mission by preaching peace to those factions who waged war against each other; in Trevigi, they began by denouncing the impious tyranny of Ezelino; but not less difficult or important was the work they had to execute in Milan. The baneful doctrines of the Manicheans, supported by the Imperial arms, were being disseminated through Lombardy. This depraved sect, hitherto satisfied with the diffusion of their pernicious dogmas and the corruption of public morals, had now become audacious, and proceeded to works of sedition and rapine. To the children of S. Dominic and S. Francis, Rome entrusted the important duty of ridding Italy of the foul contagion.

They were commissioned to avail themselves of doctrine, preaching, and example; and whenever it was necessary to resort to such, they were empowered to put in execution the severe laws which Pontiffs and kings had enacted against heretics. Foremost in this grand work, in Milan and through Lombardy, was S. Peter of Verona, of the Order of Preaching-Friars, who, with his companion, were both slain by the weapons of assassins, on the 6th of April, 1252. The Milanese, wishing to honour him who was the zealous defender of their faith, engaged Balduccio, the Pisan, to erect a splendid marble monument to his memory; which, if it be not equal to that of S Domenico at Bologna, or to the monument erected to Guido Tarlati, or to that of S. Donato in Arezzo, or, finally, to that of S. Agostino in Pavia, most certainly surpasses them all in magnificence.[1]

[1] Balduccio, as Cicognara and Lanzi suspect, was probably a disciple of Andrea Pisano. "He," writes Verri, "was charged by Duke Azzone to produce the most magnificent design possible, and to execute it with all diligence and artistic power."—Cicognara Storia della Scultura, lib. iii., chap. viii., p. 442; Verri, Storia di Milano, Vol. I., p. 442. The marble monument to S. Peter Martyr, is in length five cubits and fourteen and a-half ounces; in breadth, one cubit and twenty-three ounces. The total height of the arca or shrine, from the pavement to the statue of the Saviour, is twelve cubits and twelve ounces. It is sculptured with arabesques, and has eight histories of the Saint in basso-relievo, with many statues on the sides and summit. It was finished in the year 1339. It is not true, as some have asserted, that this monument should be attributed to the generosity of Azzone Visconti, and Giovanni, his uncle, Bishop of Novara; for Taegio narrates, (Ampl. Chronicæ, p. ii. p. 192,) "that many persons from various parts of the world sent large alms for the construction of this ark." Amongst the contributors were the King of Cyprus, who gave three hundred gold ducats, and a nobleman of that island who gave one hundred. The Cardinal Matteo Orsini advanced the same amount. The Bishop Giovanni Visconti gave fifty; the Duke Azzone fifty, and sixty loads of lime for the foundations and base, together with twenty gold ducats for gilding the shrine itself. These personages were all sculptured on the lid of the ark. D. Erasmo Bozzia gave thirty gold ducats; and many other nobles of France, Germany, and Italy,

Not satisfied with this, the people of Milan contributed large sums for the building of the church and convent. Fra Beltramo da Robbiano, a religious of that convent, who must have been skilled in architecture, (as were usually those selected for such employment,)[1] presided over the works. The building, interrupted for some time, was resumed by Archbishop Ottone Visconti, in 1278; and it is believed that, about this period, the church was enlarged, and reduced to its present form. In 1290, the vault of the chapel, on the left of the grand altar, was finished; and the bell-tower, according to the manuscript of Galvano Fiamma, was commenced in 1297, and perfected in 1309. Fra Giovanni da Giussano, the architect, must have been engaged at many of these works. I will here take occasion to observe, that in 1306, the first public clock ever seen in Italy, was placed in the tower of S. Eustorgio.[2]

This, no doubt, is but a very meagre memoir of the Venetian, Bolognese, and Lombard artists of the thirteenth and fourteenth century. The notices regarding them and their works, indeed, are scanty; but we will be able to make amends out of the copious materials furnished by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which produced so many illustrious men, famous in all the arts of design.

sent large subscriptions. The whole expense amounted to two thousand gold ducats.—Campana, Vita di S. Pietro Martire, lib. iv. chap. ii., p. 270, etc. Michele Caffi, Della Chiesa di S. Eustorgio in Milano, Illustrazione Storico-monumentali epigrafica Milano, 1841. 1 vol. 8vo. p. 104.

1 Caffi loc. citato. p. 20.

2 In the year 1395, Forli had its public clock, which was the work of Fra Gaspare, a Dominican whom Paolo Bonoli calls, "an excellent professor and engineer." Storia di Forli, lib. viii., vol. ii., p. 57. We hope at some future day to learn more of the works of this celebrated mechanician.

CHAPTER IX.

Notices of Fra Giovani da Campi, and Fra Jacopo Talenti, Tuscan architects—They finish the Church of S. Maria Novella—They build the new Convent—They re-build the Carraja Bridge, and raise other edifices for the Republic and private citizens.

FLORENCE, the mother and protectress of every art, presents to us new and able artificers, whose names and works she has recorded and honoured. No city has ever excelled her in the science or love of the imitative arts; and none has surpassed her in solicitude to transmit to posterity the memories of those of her children, who have reflected lustre on Italy. Whosoever has had the good fortune to carry on the banks of Arno, or to enjoy this beauteous climate, and hear the dulcet language of its people, must have perceived at a glance that the love of art is natural to the inhabitants—that they possess a remarkable power of appreciating it, and that even the poorer orders are gifted with general notions of the beautiful. Well may they be called a privileged people, for their arts, like their language, are the expression of souls intensely enamoured of all that is beautiful in nature.

The church of S. Maria Novella, commenced by Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, and whose eastern aisle was continued by Fra Borghese and Fra Albertino, brings us to speak of two other distinguished architects, who finished it in the fourteenth century, and who in their knowledge of building might be compared to Gaddi and Orgagna. These are the two lay-brothers Fra Giovanni da Campi, and Fra Jacopo Talenti. It may be said with truth, that for more than a hundred years this temple was a school

of architecture, which educated in that art many of the young religious who, as we shall see, must have become illustrious in all its branches, if immature death had not carried them off. In speaking of them we will follow the valuable Necrology, deploring the absence of the Memoirs compiled by F. Fineschi, which were lost after his death.

Fra Giovanni Brachetti was born at Campi, the birth-place of Fra Ristoro: the year is uncertain, but it was probably about 1280. He could not have learned architecture from Fra Sisto or his colleague; and his teacher must have been either Fra Albertino or Arnolfo. The Necrology informs us that he lived in the Order for twenty-two years, having taken the Dominican habit in 1317.

Fra Jacopo Talenti, who was much younger than Brachetti, was born at Nipozzano, in the diocese of Fiesole, two miles and a half from Pontassieve. The Necrology makes no mention of the date of his birth, of his parents, or of the year in which he took the Dominican habit. It would appear that he reached a great old age, and survived Giovanni twenty-three years. The history of the duomo of Orvieto mentions a certain Francesco Talenti of Florence, who, in 1327 worked in that church, and belonged to the sculptors and stone-masons who received five soldi a day—the remuneration given to the Masters. Some have concluded from this fact, that the foresaid Jacopo belonged to the Franciscan Order and that he had changed his name after taking the religious habit; but as we have discovered that he had enrolled himself amongst the Dominicans precisely in that year, it is likely that Francesco may have been his close relative; a conjecture which would lead us to think that

he belonged to a family celebrated for the cultivation of art.[1] The Necrology terms Fra Jacopo "magister lapidum," (stone-mason,) a designation frequently given to sculptors, as Cicognara has shown.[2] It appears to us, however, that Talenti's first occupation was that of a stone-mason, and that he studied or perfected himself in architecture under Fra Giovanni da Campi. He it was who produced the sculptures and traceries in the church of S. Maria Novella, as also the capitals of the pillars, the ornaments of the ancient gates and windows, and the works in the chapel of the Spaniards, together with the beautiful decorations on the pulpit or bridge (now destroyed) which formerly divided said church.[3] Fra Albertino Mazzanti having died in 1319, Fra Giovanni da Campi, who two years before had taken the Dominican habit, set about completing the church. Fra Rainerio Gualterotti, a Florentine, surnamed the Greek, had presided over the works till 1317, when he was succeeded by the far-famed Fra Jacopo Passavanti. The Florentine Republic,

[1] Storia del duomo di Orvieto. Docum. No. xxiv., p. 272. At the building of the library of S. M. Novella, we find a master Giovanni Talenti employed as a mason; he must have been a brother or nephew of Jacopo. Borghigiani, Cronaca. An. v. i., p. 377.

[2] A certain Arduino, a Venetian sculptor and architect, subscribes himself thus—"Arduinus Tajapetra, (stone-cutter) fecit." Cicogn. Stor. della Scult. L. iii., c. 2.

[3] Biliotti, Chronica etc., c. vi., p. 9. "Super ipsum (pontem) privatim sacrificabant certis diebus, festis autem diaconus et subdiaconus cantabant hic epistolam, evangelium ille, idque super marmoream illam columnam egregie sculptam, et quatuor evangelistarum figuris notatam, quæ post pontis dejectionem, Anno Dom. 1565 factam, in hospitium deportata, atque ibi erecta ad lectionem hospitibus habendam prostrat." This *bridge* was destroyed October 22 of that year, to the grief of many. Gaye, Categgio Inedito. This bridge served to separate the men from the women during Divine service. The Rev. Mr. Webb, in his valuable "Sketches of Continental Ecclesiology," opines that this bridge must have been a rude-loft.

although it had begun to build the cathedral of S. Maria del Fiore, proved itself munificent to S. Maria Novella: and in the very year in which the first stone of the new cathedral (1298) was laid, it granted 1,500 lire to be divided between the churches of S. Croce, S. Maria Novella, and S. Spirito.[1] With the contributions of the citizens and these sent by the prelates of the Order, which in that age had produced many, it was easy to hasten the completion of the sacred edifice. But the most distinguished and most zealous of all those who laboured for the building was the celebrated Passavanti. This religious, who was an eloquent preacher, a wise and elegant writer, and an exceedingly learned man, was the intimate friend of the most distinguished artists of Florence, of Gaddi, Memmi, and Orgagna, whom he consulted and invited to decorate this church; which, owing to his solicitude, and that of the religious who succeeded him, became like the Campo Santo of Pisa, and the basilica of S. Francesco in Assisi, a gallery of splendid paintings, and rarest products of the fine arts. We do not know at what time Fra Jacopo Talenti associated himself with Fra Giovanni, but the Necrology emphatically states that he laboured indefatigably at the building, and actually completed it. We do not hesitate to affirm that he may have begun to direct the works in 1339, the year in which his colleague died; and, if this be the fact, the period of his labours did not exceed eighteen years. They were both assisted by many lay-brothers of the convent, who were excellent masons. Following the design of Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, they erected the grand nave and western aisle; they also built the principal chapel, and the one next it called di S. Luca or the Gondi, and the two

[1] Gaye, loc. cit. v. 1. Appendix 2.

reat chapels, that is the Rucellai, south of the south ransept, and in the north that of the Strozzi family, edicated to S. Thomas Aquinas. The three lateral hapels of the great altar, as the architecture manifestly roves, are of a later period.

At length the year 1357 witnessed the completion of he church of S. Maria Novella. More than 100,000 gold lorins were expended on it, and seventy-seven years were evoted to the works.[1] The façade encrusted with white nd black marble, was commenced after 1350, and finished n 1470: the expenses being defrayed by many honorable milies. And this likewise is due to Passavanti, to whom urino Baldesi, in 1349, gave four hundred gold florins for he construction of the gates and their ornaments. This sum inished the façade to the arches under the great cornice. n 1456 the work was resumed at the expense of Gio- anni Paolo Rucellai, and was finally completed in 470, after the design of the celebrated Leon Battista lberti.[2]

In an age so prolific of artists, and so glorious for hristian art, when every one desired to read on the walls f the temple the most sublime pages of the Bible, the opular legends, and even the immortal strain of Dante, he artist had a grand field for the development of his enius. Religion was the fountain source of his inspira- ion, and painting was employed as a grand moral lesson vorthy of a Christian people. Well did Passavanti know he wants of his age, when he engaged Gaddi, Memmi, Orgagna, and Buffulmacco, to decorate the walls of S.

[1] Fantozzi's Guide Book says that it was finished in 1349, by Fra Gio- anni da Campi, but this architect died ten years before, *i. e.* in 1339.

[2] V. F. Fineschi's Letter on the Façade of S. M. Novella, inserted in the Novelle Letterarie of 1779.—Gio. Masselli's Notes to the Life of L. B. Alberti, by Vasari. Note xvii., p. 308.

Maria Novella. If we except Spinello di Arezzo, and Pietro Cavallini the Roman, there were none who surpassed the foresaid painters in the poetry of art. The Rucellai chapel already possessed that wonderful picture of the Madonna, by Cimabue, which the Florentines in their enthusiasm had carried in grand procession to that very temple. And indeed it was but just that the church where this great master had received his earliest inspirations should possess his rarest work. Giotto had placed within its precints the crucifix which is even now over the grand entrance. Orgagna was commissioned to fresco the great chapel, or choir, and the chapel of the Strozzi family. In the former he produced some histories of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of S. John Baptist, and S. Dominic. These grand decorations injured by damp, were, so to say, reproduced by Domenico del Ghirlandajo, in the following century, and here did the youthful Michelangelo Buonarotti employ his glorious pencil.[1] In the second chapel Orgagna painted the two Last Things, Hell and Paradise. And as the Divina Commedia constituted the delight of the people, and as Orgagna was fascinated by its beauty, he divided the Inferno according to the Dantesque circles, filling them with the damned spirits, and as it were incarnating these awful agonies which revealed themselves to the imagination of the poet. This theme had tasked the genius of Niccola Pisano, Giotto, and others, and it has been repeated with consummate mastery by the followers of he latter. But if art be not perfect here, if the nude be badly designed, and the composition frequently confused, nevertheless, Dante's poetry pervades it; and

[1] Ghirlandajo received for this work 1,000 gold florins. It was finished in 1490.

manifests the horrors of that abyss from which hope banished, and looking at it we may almost fancy that e hear

> . . . "Various tongues,
> Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
> Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
> With hands together smote, that swell the sounds."[1]

Opposite to this he painted the Glory of the Saints, id in this composition he displayed such power, that the vo works seem as if produced by different hands. It is ue, as F. Borghigiani observes, that the Paradiso was ubsequently retouched by Veraccini.[2] Finally Orgagna xecuted the beautiful picture for the altar of S. Thomas, hereon he traced his name, and the year 1357. To onamico Buffalmacco, many years before, were entrusted ie paintings of a chapel which stood on the spot now ie entrance to the belfry, and of which only one picture ow remains on the door of the same, but so injured that e no longer recognise the hand of the master. But far iore splendid than all these were the paintings which addeo Gaddi and Simone Memmi executed in the ncient chapter-room, at present called the chapel of the paniards, as it had for some time bolonged to that ation. This edifice, which may be termed a monument f vast importance in the history of Italian painting, is ut little known, and we, therefore, deem it our duty to eak of it, even at the risk of being charged with rolixity.

Buonamico di Lapo Guidalotti, merchant of Florence, aving purchased a little chapel, contiguous to the old

[1] Inferno, Canto III. Carey's transl.
[2] Cronaca Annal. v. iii., ad ann. 1556, p. 329–330.

church of S. Maria Novella, caused the foundation of the great chapter-room to be laid, A.D. 1320. This room was meant to serve as an assembly-place for the religious, and for the annual celebration of the feast of Corpus Domini.[1] Fineschi and Borghigiani, who date its erection about 1350, have fallen into an error, for Simone could not have painted it at this period, since he died at Avignon, in the year 1344.[2] Which of the two architects named above, was its author, is not quite certain. The three Dominican historians, Biliotti, Borghigiani and Fineschi, to whom we may add, Mecatti, say that it was Fra Jacopo Talenti; but in my judgment, it was Giovanni da Campi; for in 1320, Talenti was too young, and Fra Giovanni had been three years a Dominican, and had presided over the works of the church. Moreover, the beautiful cloister called il Verde (the Green,) must have been erected contemporaneously, and Fineschi asserts, that Giovanni was its builder. When the chapter-room was finished, Guidalotti resolved to adorn it with the choicest paintings. He first selected Simone Memmi, who as Rosini remarks, could not have worked there before 1336, the year in which he returned from Avignon, where he saw the celebrated Laura, whose likeness he painted in the chapter-room.[3] The second to paint there was Taddeo Gaddi; but I have not ascertained in what year. The inscription on Guidalotti's sepulchre states that the chapter-room was painted A.D. 1355, the year of his decease; and it is quite certain, that Taddeo Gaddi mus

[1] Mecatti, Notizie Storiche riguardanti il Capitolo dei P. Dom. di S. M. Novella—Fineschi Forestiero instruito in S. M. N. p. 44, Borghig. ad hunc ann.

[2] Giovanni Rosini, Storia della Pittura Italiana, v. ii., Epoca. prima, c. xii., p. 98.

[3] Rosini, loc. cit.

ave died about this period.[1] The expense amounted to ght hundred and fifty gold florins. Now we are encoun- ered here by a very great difficulty. Mecatti and Fineschi ave discovered, that Guidalotti, on his death-bed, had ft to his brother Domenico, another sum of three hundred nd twenty-five gold florins, for the completion of the ictures in the chapter-room; to which sum, because in- ufficient, as it would appear, Domenico added ninety-two ore. From this we collect, that the chapter-room ost 1,265 florins; that in the year 1355, it was not nished, and that many paintings were still to be exe- uted, for which another sum of four hundred and fifteen orins had been disbursed. But to whom were these aintings entrusted, if Memmi and Gaddi were dead, nd if the whole chapter-room, even to the very vault, ad been coloured by the same? Not having seen uidalotti's last will and testament, I incline to think at the four hundred and fifteen florins must have been pplied to the decorations of the altar, and to these works f sculpture that adorn the door and the great windows f the chapter-room, which were probably produced by ra Jacopo Talenti.[2] Having spoken of the building, t us now return to the paintings. In all that apper- ined to the historical, symbolical and legendary pictures, e artists had recourse to Passavanti, who furnished the

[1] Lanzi, History of Painting, 1st Epoch. Flor. School.
Inscription on Guidalotti's tomb:

HIC JACET MICHUS,
FILIUS OLIM. LAPII DE GUIDALOTTIS MERCATOR
QUI FECIT FIERI ET DIPINGI ISTUD CAPITULUM,
CUM CAPPELLA, SEPULTUS IN HABITU ORDINIS,
A.D., MCCC.LV. DIE III. SEPTEMBRIS,
REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

[2] It might not be unreasonable to suppose, that the tribune or chapel entioned in the inscription remained to be painted; who worked at the bsequently, is uncertain. In 1590, these paintings were restored by the sciples of Alessandro Allori, and by Procetti.

necessary notices and directed the works.[1] Simone Memmi undertook to paint three parts: the oriental, the meridianal, and the northern. In the meridianal, he executed some histories of S. Domenico and S. Pietro, martyr, which are nearly all destroyed. In the oriental, he painted the church militant and the church triumphant. In the former, he depicted the principal dignities, civil and ecclesiastical; and this work is doubly precious for the portraits it gives us of Pope Benedict XI., the Emperor Henry VII., Philip the Fair of France, Cardinal Niccolo, Albertino di Prato, Fra Angelo Acciajuoli, the Dominican bishop of Florence, Cimabue, Giotto, Arnolfo, Petrarca, and others. His idea may have been to show how, in the midst of errors, ambition and pleasures, that fascinate or torment human life, the true followers of Jesus Christ, aided by the divine assistance, may attain to celestial glory. By the errors he typified the sect of the Manicheans, by whom a great portion of Italy had been overrun. He described the heretics disputing with the Catholics; and in another compartment, he painted foxes pursued by white and black hounds, to attest the vigilance of the Preaching-Friars, who have always combated false teaching in all its multiform phases. To denote the blandishments and luxuries by which frail mortality is seduced, he painted a troop of dancing girls, amongst whom is seen the beauteous Laura, who inspired Petrarca's muse. To signify the ambition of honour and power, he introduced the highest dignities of the church and state. After these he produced confession, absolution, and repentance, by which we must enter into the church.

[1] Rosini writes, that the painting of this chapter-room was superintended by Fra Domenico Cavalca of Pisa; but he is in error, since all the memoirs of the convent of S. Maria Novella affirm, that it was Fra Jacopo Passavanti who directed these works.

iumphant—in a word, his pencil embodied all that has
en written by the erudite and elegant author of the
ork entitled, "The Mirror of True Repentance." In the
rthern part he painted Christ, ascending to Calvary:
is crucifixion and death, and his descent to the limbus
the Fathers. These pictures, for invention[1] and design,
ay be termed truly wonderful. Memmi is nowhere
ander than in these frescoes of the chapter-room.
hey reflect honour on Christian painting as well as on
e artist. Taddeo Gaddi was not equal to Memmi in
e poetry of his compositions, but he probably sur-
ssed him in design; he restricted himself, however,
a simpler style of composition. In the western
partment, he painted S. Thomas Aquinas triumphing
er error, and treated the subject, much in the style
Francesco Traini, in his great picture, which is in
e convent of S. Catherine at Pisa. He represents
e holy doctor seated with an open book in his
nd, and surrounded by patriarchs, prophets, apos-
s, and doctors; at his feet are the heretics in con-
sion; amongst whom, overwhelmed with shame, is
e Arab Averrhoes, the corrupter of the doctrines of
istotle; whose deliriums S. Thomas Aquinas had so
nally confuted. In the lower part he pourtrayed four-
en female figures to represent the most distinguished
tues and sciences, and under them the most illustrious
ltivators of the same. The Byzantines and Giottesque
re ardent admirers of this symbolism. On the vault of

[1] Here it may not be out of place to give the reader Borghini's definition of "*Invention* and *Design*." "Invention," says this learned writer on art, is that history or fable, or man or God, which Painting or Sculpture repre-sents, and it may be derived from the artist himself or from others. Design is an apparent demonstration by lines of that which was first conceived in the mind, and imagined in the idea."—V. Il Riposo, lib. i., p. 58, l. ii., p. 157

the chapter-room, he painted the Resurrection of our Lord, the Holy Ghost descending into the supper-room, and the barque of Peter tost on the waters. Gaddi, in his emulation of Memmi, applied himself with so much study and diligence to this work, that it may be classed as the grandest of all his paintings.

All these pictures must in great part be attributed to the zeal of Passavanti. But it may be asserted with truth, that, commencing from the Greeks and Cimabue, this church and its cloisters engaged the genius and art of all the illustrious painters of the Florentine school, with the exception of Andrea del Sarto, and Fra Bartolomeo della Porta; for, independently of the foresaid, Spinello di Arezzo, Fra Giovanni l'Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Paolo Ucello, and Massaccio, worked within its precincts. And it appears from the ancient records, that the walls of this church, from top to basement, were all adorned with pictures of the Giotto school. These were destroyed, however, in the sixteenth century, when the building was modernized under the direction of Giorgio Vasari. Let this suffice concerning S. Maria Novella.

Resuming the life of the architect Fra Giovanni de' Campi, we may observe, that his occupations in the church and cloister did not prevent him from engaging in public works, to which he was frequently invited on account of his great skill and ability, in the years 1318 and 1321. The masons and stone-cutters of S. Maria Novella were employed by the Republic to erect some edifices; and the decrees of the State are still preserved in our archives. In that which relates to 1319, there is a record of a building erected contiguous to their convent, in order to lodge the officers of the Republic, as well as those distinguished visitors who might happen to pass through Florence. This edifice, though meant for

blic utility, was in great part built at the expense of e Friars, the State granting only two hundred lire.[1] ne Dominicans were driven to this alternative in order be rid of the inconvenience attendant on lodging angers in their domicile; for, since the Republic had place fit for such accommodations, it was usual to nd illustrious guests to the various convents of the y, and particularly to S. Maria Novella, though at at period very poor and very small. Such as it was, wever, it was soon found to be utterly unsuited for s purpose; so much so, that in 1419, on occasion of e visit of Martin V., who came to Florence, accom-nied by a large retinue of Cardinals and Prelates, the y caused a magnificent apartment to be built for him the convent of S. Maria Novella, expending thereon een hundred florins out of the fund set apart for the ction of the duomo.[2]

Far more important is the decree, dated February 10,

Gaye, loc. cit. (To the Friars of S. Maria Novella, two hundred florins)— nce they have begun to build, near the gate of their convent, a house onsiderable dimensions, the walls of which are now raised to the coping-e, which house will be of great utility to the Republic, for the reception he officers of the state, as well as of other citizens, as the case may be; indeed, the said Friars have not houses large enough for such pur-s, as has been very sufficiently proved."

Gaye, loc. cit, "January 31, 1419. The builders of the cathedral of ence are to erect, at the cost of said cathedral, in the convent of S. Maria ella. a habitation for our Lord Pope Martin V. The expenditure is not xceed fifteen hundred gold florins." The said Pontiff, on his return from council of Constance, remained in this convent, with his court, for the of six months. Pope Eugene IV. dwelt there six years (A.D. 1434,) there assembled the ecumenic council, for the reconciliation of the ks. In 1451, this convent was the temporary abode of the Emperor deric III. and Ladislaus, his nephew, King of Hungary. A.D. 1459, e Pius II. took up his residence in it. In 1474, Cristierno, King of den, received its hospitality; and in 1515, Pope Leo X. dwelt beneath oof.

1321, in which the Republic votes to the Dominicans the great sum of 2000 florins, for the restoration of old buildings and the erection of new ones. Although it does not set forth whether these belonged to the city or to the religious, it would appear that the architects and masons of S. Maria Novella were invited to undertake public works, as the Orders of the Umiliati and Gesuati[1] were wont to do at that period. For, indeed, it is not likely that a Mendicant Order possessed many habitations, or that the Republic would have made them a present of such a large sum.

But the work that shall always render Fra Giovanni da Campi's memory dear to posterity, is the present beautiful bridge over the Arno, vulgarly called "la Carraja." This noble monument of his genius occupies the site of that erected a century before by his two predecessors, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro. And since some have striven to rob him of this honour, we deem it our duty to maintain it for him by producing authentic documents.

We have already narrated, how, towards the close of 1269, the two Dominican architects, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, had built the piers, and constructed a wooden bridge, like these at that period generally adopted throughout Florence. In the year 1304, the events which we are going to describe, contributed to the destruction of this bridge (the Carraja). Florence was once more a prey to civil discord: the Guelphs and Ghibellines were succeeded by the factions known as the Neri and Bianchi (the Blacks and Whites).[2] The bishop

[1] This Order, founded about 1367, was suppressed by Clement IX. A.D. 1668.

[2] For the origin and history of these factions, V. Macchiavelli's Hist. of Florence, p. 66.

ottieri, instead of promoting peace, as was his duty, laced himself at the head of the Bianchi. Benedict XI. eing informed of the terrible internecine war, then aging amongst the citizens, despatched Cardinal Niccolo lbertino di Prato, of the Order of the Preaching-riars, to allay the tumult, and stay bloodshed. The ontiff remembered, that another member of this in-itute, had reconciled similar factions, in 1279. "This laster Nicholas," writes Giovanni Villani, "Cardina- Prato, was a Dominican, very learned, very wise, and Ghibelline origin."[1] The fact of belonging to a mily, partial to one of the two political factions, caused e people to suspect him; and, as all his efforts to ring about peace were unavailing, he retired to his wn country; nevertheless, in the following year, when e parties had been somewhat quieted, it was resolved celebrate his return from Prato, by a grand popular stival.[2] "The people of Borgo San Friano," continues illani, "were in the habit of inventing many sorts of nusements; and amongst others, they announced that l persons desirous of hearing news from the other world, ould assemble on the Carraja bridge on the kalends of lay. On this occasion the Arno presented the unusual ght of a vast number of boats and rafts, whereon were arious parties tricked out as demons, and enveloped in mes, who shouted and groaned in mimic agony. It as a spectacle terrible and odious to hear and see. The ncourse of the people was immense, and the Carraja-idge, *which was of wood, resting on stone piers*, yielded

[1] Villani Cronaca, l. viii. c. 66. Macchiavelli, loc. cit.

[2] The Florentines, annually, celebrated many of these festivities in their urches. It was on one of these occasions, that the church di Santo Spirito as burned to the ground, A.D. 1471. This church was rebuilt, after the signs of Brunellesco.

to the pressure, and multitudes were either killed by the falling timbers or drowned in the Arno. In fact, the promise of intelligence from the other world proved to be no joke; for many who came to be amused, very soon learned more than they had anticipated."[1] After this the Carraja was entirely rebuilt of stone, but who the architect was does not appear. In the decrees of the year 1332, we read that there was a deliberation concerning the paving of the bridge. But the work had scarcely been carried into effect, when the Arno was flooded to an extent unprecedented in the annals of the city. Having done great damage in Valdarno, Casentino, and Arezzo, it was now swollen by tributary torrents, which acquired additional strength when mingled with the Sieve near the city. Sweeping away the banks in its impetuosity, it first encountered the Carraja, leaving only two of its arches standing. Of the Trinità bridge it left but one pier and an arch. Having shattered the Ponte Vecchio, which was propped up with wood, and nearly carried away the Rubaconte, it rushed out on the unhappy city, causing the death of more than three hundred persons. Villani, who was an ocular witness of these disasters, relates that it cost the Florentines one hundred and fifty thousand gold florins to repair the bridges and other edifices.[2] At this crisis the Republic needed able architects, and amongst others it selected Taddeo Gaddi and Fra Giovanni da Campi. To the former it entrusted the rebuilding of the Ponte Vecchio; to the latter the Carraja. Vasari and Baldinucci assert that the Trinità bridge was re-constructed by Gaddi; but Bottari, in his Notes to the Life of this

[1] Vasari says, that this representation of hell, was invented by Buffalmacco.

[2] Villani, loc. cit. l. xi. c. 12.

painter and architect, suspects that it was rebuilt by Da Campi.[1] Probably Baldinucci may err when he states that "Gaddi rebuilt the Ponte Vecchio after his own design, of square stone;" since the Florentine chronicler affirms that "*only two piers were added to it.*" However the Carraja was rebuilt from the foundations, as we learn from Villani, who says, "In the month of July, of the year 1334, the new bridge, called 'Alla Carraja,' was commenced from the foundations."[2] To prove that Fra Giovanni da Campi was its builder, besides the authority of Baldinucci and Bottari, we have that of the Necrology, which gives him all the credit of this grand work.[3]

Another, and not less valuable, document has been brought to light by Fra Borghigiani; and it is the old ledger of the syndic of the convent. This contains an account of various sums paid by the Commune to Fra Giovanni for this work. An entry made in 1337 records how this lay-brother-architect gave the syndic thirty florins out of his earnings from the Carraja bridge, which he directed to be expended on the pavement of the new dormitory, at which Fra Jacopo Talenti laboured incessantly. With these authorities before them, none, I presume, will dare to rob Fra Giovanni of the honour accruing from this great work. It was completed in January, A.D. 1336, and cost over twenty-five thousand gold florins. The Trinità bridge, according to Vasari, cost twenty thousand; and Baldinucci erred when

[1] V. Vasari's Lives.

[2] Villani, loc. cit.

[3] Necrol. S. M. Nov. No. 277—"The Commune appointed him the principal, and only architect, of that entire work." The Archives state, that in the 1st of November, 1333, a committee was formed to enquire, by what contrivance a communication might be kept with the two banks of the river."—Gaye, Carteggio Ined.

stating that the expense amounted to two hundred thousand; since Villani writes that all the losses caused by the inundation did not exceed one hundred and fifty thousand gold florins. Baldinucci has fallen into a similar error when he states that the Ponte Vecchio cost sixty thousand.[1]

The Carraja bridge, with its five arches of stone, remains to this day in Florence, and after the Trinità, (built two centuries later,) it is the most beautiful of these that span the Arno. The heavy floods of succeeding ages caused it to undergo some repairs; and, after the terrible inundation of 1557, which carried away two of its piers and two of its arches, they were restored by Bartolommeo Ammannato. But it is not true, as the Florence Guide-Book of 1830 states, that the bridge was entirely rebuilt.[2] This was not asserted by contemporaneous writers, and the very character of the architecture would be sufficient to prove the contrary. I hold, however, for certain, that Ammannato, besides the two arches and two piers, added also the spurs that strengthen the piers, which, like these of the Trinità, belong to the same architect.

During the time that Fra Giovanni da Campi was employed at these public works, Fra Jacopo Talenti and the other Dominican architects and masons were actively engaged at the building of the church and convent. About 1330 they constructed the beautiful belfry, after the design left by Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro; and this is

[1] Notizie dei Professori del disegno, Decennio III. del Sec. 2.

[2] In a MS. Record, of the convent of S. Marco, Florence, we read—"On this 13th of Septemb. 1557, at the third hour of night, the Arno, swollen by heavy rains, burst its banks, and overflowed the city for a mile and a half. . . . . In Florence it destroyed the Trinità bridge entirely—it destroyed two piers and two arches, and in great part, destroyed the Rubaconte, so that one cannot pass over," &c.

manifest from the inscriptions on the old bells. One bears date 1331, the other 1334. The belfry is one hundred and eighteen braccia in height; and such is its graceful lightness, that, if we except the campanile of the duomo, there is none in Florence to excel or equal it. It cost eleven thousand gold florins.[1] In the year 1334 they finished the great chapel of S. Niccolò, with the sacristy contiguous, which is frescoed with histories of our Lord by Spinello di Arezzo. Fra Ottaviano Rustici, who was eminently skilled in architecture, presided over these works. Two lay-brothers of the same convent, Fra Lapo Bruschi and Fra Francesco da Carnignano were employed by Talenti as his head masons. Meanwhile, the memorable inundation had occasioned great injury to the primitive subterranean church and ancient convent. The lower dormitory had been filled with water. The religious, therefore, saw the necessity of erecting, from the foundations, a new and larger, and withal higher convent than the old one, in order to be prepared for similar contingencies. In fact, they had already commenced a new dormitory, spacious enough for the religious who daily became more numerous, as appears from a memorial which they presented to the Republic in 1334—a memorial ignored by all the historians of the Order. In this they prayed for means to complete the church and the dormitory commenced long before, and for an additional plot of ground for the foreaid edifices. Following the chronology of F. Borghigiani, we will notice how the new wing of the convent was built over the grand cloister, and how, when it was discovered that the pilasters of the same were too weak to sustain the superincumbent weight, it became necessary to

[1] The expenses of the campanile were defrayed by Mons. S. Saltarelli, Archbishop of Pisa, a religious of the convent of S. M. Novella.

strengthen them. For such an immense building large sums were required; but as sufficient money could not be procured at one and the same time, the work was interrupted; so much so, that the architecture resulted in that irregularity so plainly visible at the present moment. Amongst those who contributed largely to the necessary funds, was Fra Giovanni Infangati, who, aided by his relatives, built the meridianal wing. The western is due to Angelo Acciajuoli, bishop of Florence. Mons. Simone Salterelli, archbishop of Pisa, and Fra Scolario Squarci, all children of this convent, in great part contributed to the completion of the whole. At what period the convent and church were finished is not very certain. In the year 1337 the pavement of the new dormitory was perfected; but in 1340 the cloister was not finished. This beautiful cloister, with its fifty-six arches, is the largest in all Florence. A short time before 1570 the solicitude of the Ven. F. Capocchi caused the painting of it to be commenced; and the most distinguished artists of the Florentine school were engaged, and, according to Lanzi, the works which they produced here may be regarded as the pictorial history of that school, (the Florentine,) in its third epoch. Bronzino, Allori, Santi di Tito, Cosimo Gamberucci, Poccetti[1] and others painted the histories of S. Dominic, of S. Peter Martyr, of S. Thomas of Aquino, and of S. Antonino. All these works were executed at the expense of the religious of the convent. With the exception of a few large lunettes, it was entirely finished, A.D. 1582.

At the moment when the convent and church were well nigh being completed, Fra Giovanni da Campi, the celebrated architect, migrated from this world. This was

[1] Stor. Pittorica Scuola Fior. epoca 3.

in the twenty-second year of his claustral life, A.D. 1399. He passed away regretted by his confreres and all the citizens, to whom he had rendered such important services. He was a great artist, and a most pious and exemplary Friar.[1]

No one that has seen his works, particularly the Carraja bridge, the chapel of the Spaniards, and the green cloister in S. M. Novella, will deny him a distinguished place amongst the great architects of the fourteenth century. He is honourably mentioned by Baldinucci, Cicognara, and Bottari, in a copious note to his Life of the Angelico. But it will not astonish the learned in these matters, when we observe that Francesco Milizia seems to have known nothing of him, of Fra Sisto, Fra Ristoro, or Jacopo Talenti; another proof, if such be wanting, of the worthlessness of the book entitled, "Memoirs of Ancient and Modern Architects."

Having such an abundance of architects, the religious of S. Maria Novella were in no difficulty as to the prosecution of the works in the church and convent. The whole was now confided to Fra Jacopo Talenti, who had already devoted much time to forward both. And, in fact, when we compare the works of the latter with these of Fra Giovanni, we discover such identity of design and workmanship, that they appear to have been erected, not by different, but by the same hands. Talenti was

[1] Necrol. S. M. "N. F. Johannes conversus fil. olim Brachetti de Campis, fuit morum maturitate necnon precipua honestate prepollensi. Hic effectus est in ordine bonus *carpentarius* et industrius in edificiis construendis, unde contigit, quod post diluvium quod inundavit Florentiam A.D. 1333 ad reedificationem del ponte alla Carraja quem præfatum diluvium dissipavit, ipse factus est per Commune totius illius operis principalis et unicus architector, tandemque ipsum cum honore ordinis et suo laudabiliter consumavit, ita ut in aliis operibus civitatis continue et avide peteretur. Vixit autem in ordine ann. xxii. tandemque longa ægritudine paulatim ad extrema deductus obiit A.D. 1339."

singularly remarkable for the celerity with which he conducted his buildings; for he was wont to undertake many, all at the same time, and to perfect them in the briefest term possible. Scarcely was the church of S. Maria Novella finished, when he commenced the sacristy, a noble and severe edifice, in which you do not know what you are to admire most, its solidity, or its airy lightness. It must have been finished in 1350, for in that year it was used as a chapel by the Cavalcanti family, and there was placed in it a marble monument to Mainardo Cavalcanti, grand seneschal of Queen Johanna of Naples.[1] About the same year, (1350,) he laid the foundations of the refectory, which was completed in 1353. A more beautiful work than this is no where to be seen.[2] This and the great chapel of S. Niccolò, may be regarded as his most perfect works. They are both remarkable for the beauty of their vaults, the harmony of their proportions, and the admirable arrangement of their windows. Two years after the completion of the church, (1357,) he erected the vaults of the ancient hospice, which is now used as a refectory. In 1360 he resumed the building of the dormitory; and long before this he had completed the library and chapel of S. Anthony, abbot. The belfry, twice struck by lightning, was twice restored by him. To all these we may add the works he executed for the Republic and private citizens. The Necrology tells us that they occupied him for many years. If the two first architects deserve our gratitude for having furnished the design of S. Maria Novella, surely Talenti merits our praise for having carried it

[1] Fineschi, Forestiero, Instr. p. 35.

[2] The old Records state, that F. Passavanti gave twenty gold florins for the painting of the refectory: the work was executed by an unknown hand of the Giottesque School.

.t so perfectly. I, for my part, never see these edifices thout experiencing a sense of veneration for this illus-.ous artist, who, although the equal of Gaddi and rgagna, studiously desired to conceal himself in the ence of his solitude, and, like the architect-brethren no preceded him, sought in God alone the premium .d the praise of his honoured labours. He died of the stilence on the second of October, 1362. And the ecrology, so chary of its praise to the deceased religious, cords the exemplarity of his life and his zeal for the ory of the Order to which he belonged.[1]

CHAPTER X.

i Giovannino da Marcojano, and other religious Architects of the Convent of S. Maria Novella, pupils of Fra Giovanni da Campi and Fra Jacopo Talenti.

HERE are no gloomier records in the annals of Florence an these of the pestilence of the year 1348. It is said have come from the East into our peninsula, where it used such terrible disasters, that the like have never en witnessed since or before. Giovanni Boccaccio has ven us a terrible narrative of its ravages in Florence; a

[1] Necrol S. M. Novellæ, No. 416, "F. Jacopo Talenti of Nipozzano, a lay-other, stone-master (magister lapidum) and architect, so famous, that the mmune of Florence and its nobility, for many years, availed themselves of services in their buildings. He built a great part of the church of Maria Novella, and the chapter-room, and sacristy. In the convent, he s a man of good and exemplary life, and always full of zeal for the honor his Order. After many labors, he passed out of this life to the rest he arned for, Octob. 2, 1362." Although this article attributes the chapel the Spaniards to him, I cannot induce myself to believe, that Talenti s its author, but that it, of right, belongs to Fra Giovanni da Campi, as have already observed.

narrative, in sooth, which makes one tremble. Nearly one hundred thousand citizens were the victims of this direful scourge. The convent of S. Maria Novella had to deplore the loss of more than eighty religious, amongst whom were many youths who had studied architecture under Fra Giovanni and Fra Jacopo. Some who had survived the plague of 1348, were carried off immaturely in the pestilences that followed; for, indeed, after the first tremendous visitation, the plague became indigenous, and, throughout an entire century, manifested itself from time to time in virulent and mitigated phases. In that of 1362, (the year of Talenti's death,) the convent lost twenty-eight of its religious; in that of 1383, fourteen, amongst whom was the Blessed Alessio Strozzi, in the thirty-fourth year of his age. The plague of 1400 carried off twenty; and nine perished in that of 1417.

Amongst the victims of 1348, in his mature years, was a lay-brother-architect, who is not mentioned by the historians of art, and whose only record is found in the Necrology. This is Fra Giovannino, whose cognomen is suppressed. He was born in Marcojano del Mugello. He took the habit in S. M. Novella, in the year 1302, or thereabouts; and from this we infer that he had learned the art from Fra Giovanni da Campi: he cultivated painting, but the requirements of his convent caused him to devote himself principally to architecture. I cannot say that he was employed at the public works in Florence, but he must have assisted Talenti in building S. Maria Novella. What makes us confident of his high merits is that he was sent to Rome to work at S. Peter's. I have not ascertained what Pope employed him, the year he went to Rome, or the work which he executed. All this, we grieve to say, is suppressed in the Necrology; for Fra Jacopo Altoriti, who made the entry, being fa

more desirous of recording his excellence as a religious than describing his ability as an architect, restricts himself to a narrative of the virtues which adorned Giovannino's life. He tells us that he was given to fasting and prayer; that he took little sleep; and that he was indefatigable in sculpturing, building, and painting; nay, more, that his chief pleasure, when surrounded by the groups that came to admire his works, was to entertain them by reciting the most graceful passages of the holy Scriptures. After a laborious and sanctified life, he died of the pestilence, April 16, 1348, in the sixtieth year of his age.[1] It is a consolation to the writer of these Memoirs, that it has been his good fortune to have rescued the name of Giovannino from the oblivion in which it was shrouded for five centuries.

Continuing our narrative of the other religious of that convent who applied themselves to architecture, we find in the Necrology, (No 309,) a certain Fra Matteo Guiducci da Campi, who is lauded as an industrious and excellent CARPENTER. He died on the 25th of August, 1346, after having spent twenty-nine years in the Order. We have already remarked in what sense this word, *carpenter*, should be understood, since the Necrology always employs it to signify an architect. Fra Giovanni da

[1] Nicol. No. 321. "F. Joanninus de Marcojano de Mugello conversus fuit vita mirabiliter exemplaris, multarum abstinentiarum et vigiliarum et orationum, nunquam vacando otio. Nan cum esset optimus lignorum faber [carpentarius perutilis, [here the architect is distinguished from the carpenter] multa et magna edificiorum perfecit in diversis conventibus provinciæ etiam in Urbe in Ecclesia S. Petri. Fuit insuper bonus pigmentarius, [painter,) erat etiam instructus hujus artis. Historias Bibliæ memoriter tenebat in quarum narratione dum operabatur manibus devotum solatium habebat. Tandem decursis in ordine annis xlvi. vel circa, ei Deus, ut pie credi potest, post diutinos labores, quietis tribuit mansionem, A.D. 1348 die xvi. Aprilis."

Settignano is described as very skilful in that art; but he died when very young, A.D. 1348. Fra Francesco da Murello is spoken of as most studious of the same art. After ten years monastic life, he, too, was stricken by the plague, and died in the said year. Finally, the Necrology mentions another lay-brother, named Fra Giacomo di Andrea, of Florence, whom it lauds as an able artificer in wood, stone, and glass. He was for some time at Rome, and died of the plague in Viterbo, A.D. 1369, having lived forty years in the Order. He is spoken of by the historians, Biliotti and Borghigiani.[1] Of others who devoted themselves to other branches of art, we shall have occasion to speak elsewhere. But Fra Francesco da Carmignano deserves special mention. It appears that he was an engineer, and worked with Fra Lapo Bruschi, in the great chapel of S. Niccolo, as we have already said. The following anecdote is recorded of him. A certain Fra Ubertino de' Filippi, a priest of the same convent, in the year 1345, pronounced a discourse from the pulpit, exhorting the young men of Florence to undertake a crusade against the Saracens. A long series of calamities, and the interval of three centuries, had not yet extinguished their hatred of that barbarous race. I know not what was the scope of this armament, for Tolemais had for many years been in possession of the Turks; but their object, probably, was to retake this place, and expel the Mahomedans. He soon mustered a number of armed men, amongst whom were ten religious of his convent, some priests, and some lay-brothers. Of the latter was Fra Francesco da Carmignano; and the whole posse having appointed Fra

[1] Chron. cap. xx. p. 24.—Borgh. Cron. Annal. ad ann. 1368, p. 116.

Ubertino, chief of the expedition, set sail for the East.[1] The Chronicles of the convent, narrating their exploits, tell how the lay-brother Fra Francesco, directed the machines then used in sieges, as well as the construction of the necessary fortifications. In all these operations, he conducted himself with singular bravery and skill, inflicting as much damage as he possibly could on the enemy. As the reward of his valour he petitioned to be admitted to the order of priesthood, and his prayer was granted.[2] Those who escaped the Ottoman scimitars were mowed down subsequently by the fatal pestilence that devastated Florence in 1348.

We have now completed the artistic history of S. Maria Novella; nor do we find in that convent, after the fourteenth century, any distinguished cultivator of the arts, save a few Miniaturists, of whom we are about to speak. We have seen the great number of its able architects, and the love they cherished for all the arts of design, with which, for more than six centuries, the religious of that convent laboured to embellish their church and cloisters. And most certainly if the pestilence of 1348, and these which followed, had not cut off many of its youth, who devoted themselves to architecture, we should have had some amongst them in many respects equal

[1] Besides Fra Francesco da Carmignano and Fra Ubertino de Filippi, there were, belonging to that expedition, Fra B. di Buonacorso, Fra Otton di Stefano, Fra Tommaso Mazzei, Fra Ardinghi, Fra de' Rigaletti, Fra Dom. da Castel Fiorentino, and Fra Bartolom. di Acone. (Acon Tolemais.) In the siege of St Jean d'Acre, (1291,) we find two other religious of the convent of S. M. Novella actually fighting. They were Fra Lapo da Cascia, and Fra Matteo da Florence, the first of whom was slain. (Necrol.) There was also in this convent Fra Manetto de' Calcagni, a priest, who, according to the Necrology, died beyond the seas in Acon." The Dominicans at this period had a convent in Tolemais, mentioned by Ricoldo in his Itinerary.

[2] Biliotti. Chronic. c. xxxv. p. 39, "Qui cum esset conversus, et machinarum bellicarum extruendarum optime gnarus, profectus est cum quibusdam

to Fra Sisto, Fra Ristoro, and their contemporaries. A little further on, we shall see the arts migrating t the convent of S. Mark, in the same city, where not architecture, but painting, despite the rigours of a first reform, was cultivated with a zeal unparalleled in all the other cloisters of Italy. And, in fact, it would seem as if art had grown enamoured of austerity, and that it aided the aesthetic genius of the artists; for when S. Antonino revived the ancient discipline, the Blessed Angelico began to produce his heavenly tints: and at a subsequent period, when Savonarola revivified the monastic body, Porta came forth in all his glory. Both reformers were great men, and great was their influence on art. No one can look at the paintings of the Angelico, without feeling how the soul of the artist was swayed by the gentle influences of the holy Archbishop of Florence; but contemplating the sternness and grandeur of Fra Bartolommeo, we are at once reminded of the fierce invectives of the REPUBLICAN FRIAR, and of his tremendous ruin.

patribus in Christianorum exercitum contra Turcas. Quibus contra Christianos bellantibus multa intulisset incomoda, et Christianos multum juvisset habitum meruit et obtinuit clericorum."

[1] The Chronicle of F. Modesto Biliotti has the following notice: "F. J Ricci, in the second year of his prefecture, (1582,) received three youth skilled in architecture into the Order. They were lay-brothers, who restore many edifices in the city and country, and many were the buildings whi they raised." And F. Joseph Richa writes that "almost all the armorie urns, and busts (of the sacristy) are the work of lay-brothers of S. Mar Novella, where there have always been able men in each of the three arts Notizie Storiche delle Chiese Fior. v. 3, p. 46.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOMINICAN MINIATURISTS.

Miniaturists of the fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries in S. Maria Novella, S. Marco in Florence, and S. Catherine at Pisa.

THE history of miniature is so important, the number of its artists so great, and the art itself so exquisitely beautiful, that it requires some diligent and zealous hand to record its progress and vicissitudes. In this respect, the general history of Italian art is far from being complete; and the same may be said of painting on glass, mosaic, and tarsia.[1]

This is to be accounted for by reason of the great masters who raised historic painting to a height of glory that won universal admiration for its developments; so much so, that the minor arts were almost uncared for, nevertheless it is in miniature precisely that we must study the genesis of painting during the early ages. It alone, after architecture, sustained the honour of art through a long course of centuries; and without it, it would be difficult to learn whether the Italians ever painted in these days, since man and time had destroyed every vestige of pictorial art, properly so called, with the exception of a few ignoble fragments of mosaic. In fact, M. d' Agincourt, writing the history of painting during the long period of the middle ages, could discover only an immense number of miniatures, which are still treasured in the principal libraries of Europe.

[1] Tarsia or Intarsia, is work of wood inlaid in various colours.

Born in the disastrous days of barbaric irruptions, miniature may be said to have grown up within the shadow of the cloister. Fed on pious legends and on the psalmody of the monks, it sweetened their solitude, strengthened their piety, and preserved the precious fragments of the classics, which were esteemed by the barbarians only for the gold with which the pages were embellished, and for the beauteous tintings that adorned them. Enamoured of mysticism and contemplative life, it decked itself with the biblical and liturgical poetry of the Catholic Church. Hence, whenever the same individual was a chronicler of pious legends and a miniaturist, his glowing, though homely phrases, like his little pictures, were deeply impressed with the devotion of his heart. Above each picture he was wont to wreath a crown of flowers that his written words might find an echo in the graces of his pencil; which, sooth to say, was often a better interpreter of the secrets of his heart, than the barbarous idiom of the Sclaves, or the still more barbarous Latin then spoken. Hence, (as a celebrated writer of our times reflects,) the rigours of monastic life were a great obstacle to the influence of paganism and the profane joys of the age; and the work of the artist, prosecuted regularly, as though it were an ascetic exercise, in the silence of his cell, became thus an association with the triumphs and bygone tribulations of the church—a commemoration of martyrdoms and miracles, an act of faith in some particular dogma, a devout pilgrimage to some sepulchre or Calvary; or, more happily still, it developed itself in fervid prayer, accompanied by an abundant effusion of tears, as Vasari narrates of the Blessed Angelico.[1]

Such, for many centuries, was the history of miniature

[1] Rio, De la Poesie Chretienne, c. vi. p. 174.

the various cloisters of the Benedictines, Camaldulese d Dominicans, whilst it numbered amongst its cultiva- rs such men as Cassidorus and Cardinal Giov. Dominici. ıt, after the celebrated D. Giulio Clovio, of the Regular nons, had raised it to an eminence that deserved for it place beside the grand productions of Raffaello's age, e introduction of printing and engraving caused it to ppear. It is true that it was not confined to trifling to merely devout subjects; on the contrary, the Idyl, e Eclogue and the Epic called forth all the power and aces of its most refined cultivators. Hence, Atavante, nerardo, the miniaturist, and Memmi embellished the ges of Martial, Silius Italicus, the Eneid, the Eclogues Virgil, etc. And if Alighieri, in the Divina Com- dia, records with honour the two grand fathers of lian Painting, Cimabue and Giotto, he has not omitted e two most celebrated miniaturists of his age, Oderigi Gubbio, and Franco of Bologna.[1]

It would be a grand and noble work to give us the story of Italian miniature, of which there are so many orious remains in the public and conventual libraries of ome, Ferrara, Modena, etc.: and it would, no doubt, pply the omissions of Agincourt, whose sketch does t go beyond the Renaissance of painting.[2] We,

[1] Purgat. Canto XI.

"Art thou not Oderigi? art not thou
Agobbio's glory—glory of that art,
Which they of Paris call the limner's skill?"
"Brother!" said he, "with tints that gayer smile,
Bolognian Franco's pencil lines the leaves."

CAREY'S TRANS.

Here we may observe, that Mr. Carey has very poorly translated Dante's rase, which is "*alluminare.*"

[2] M. Rio, in the work quoted, has given us some specimens of miniatures. ıt it appears that he did not see the truly beautiful ones in the Ducal rary of Modena, executed for Duke Borso, by Giovanni Russi, about

however, have thought it wise to preface the history of the Dominican Painters with this short essay on the miniaturists of the Order, because they preceded them, and because we could not comprehend the Blessed Angelico, nor generally the followers of the Giottesque school, who were so excellent in this art, if we were not at first initiated in the history of miniature. Every one knows that the Greeks themselves, not to speak of the numerous disciples of Giotto, commenced with it; and that, as its dimensions enlarged, and the theories of Chiaroscuro were better studied, it finally eventuated in grand historical painting. Nay, more, a great many of the works of these artists, on canvas and in fresco, are simply repetitions of these very histories which they had miniatured in books, profane and choral. From the fact of the parchment being better preserved than the canvas or walls, and being, likewise, less exposed to retouchings, we may affirm that the miniatures present the truest types and traditions of the two schools. Let us observe, also, that the ancients were accustomed to attach to every picture a predella, or gradino,[1] which contained scenes of the Life of the Saint whose effigy was on the canvas; nay, the very ornaments of the cornices exhibited a variety of most graceful little figures; and,

1455; or that he did not remember these of Giulio Clovio. Otherwise he would not have written that "les artistes ultramontains vinrent etonner l'Italie par la perfection qu'ils savaient donner a ce genre d'ouvrages."

[1] To understand this word, which frequently occurs in the following pages we deem it well to give M. Montalembert's definition of it. "The *Predella* or *Gradino* is a small longitudinal border, which is generally placed by the ancient masters under their principal pictures; on this border they were wont to paint various passages of the life of the saint or saints who formed the subject of their work. Thus Fra Angelico's *chef-d'œuvre* (the Coronation of Our Lady), has a *Predella* or *Gradino*, representing the life of S. Dominic. This master-piece is in the Louvre.

nce, it was absolutely necessary to study miniature, as l Cimabue and Giotto.

And here let us remark that the cultivators of this art re divided into two classes; the miniaturists, properly called, and the miniature-caligraphists. It was the vince of the first to colour the histories, the ara-sques, etc., and to lay the gold ornaments on the ges. The second wrote the book and the initial ters, frequently traced in red or blue, which were so ricious, and withal so graceful, that they leave us ubtful what we ought to admire most—the genius of artist or his unwearied patience. People of this class, en skilled in the art, were described as "fair writers," ilchri scriptores.) Every convent had a great many them. Sometimes the same person wrote and minia-ed the book; and then the workmanship was far more fect. We must not forget, however, that the ancient moirs often describe both under the same denomination "fair writers;" and this should guard us in discrimi-ing their respective merits.

The first miniaturists of whom I find mention in the ronicles of the Order, belong to the first half of the rteenth century, and to the convent of S. Maria vella; but the authors of that Necrology, not caring to tinguish between miniaturist and *caligraphist*, leave to doubt whether they should be classed amongst the t or second.[1] Only one of them is described as a nter, and he was a priest, named Fra Guido, son of a tain Niccolo, of the parish of the Holy Trinity. After ising him for the exemplarity of his life, and his

[1] We may mention, amongst others, the Fathers P. Macci, who died in 1; Fra Carlo Bellocci, who died in 1336; Fra Matteo Marconaldi, who in 1348; Fra Tom. di Romena, deceased, A.D. 1358, etc. All these are ribed as "fair-writers."

abilitity as a preacher, the Necrology tells us that he was a fair writer, (pulcher scriptor,) and a universal mechanician (totus mechanicus). Instead of being a miniaturist, he might have been a painter on canvas or in fresco; and he is the first Dominican whom I find decorated with this title. Like the other architects of this convent, he also fell a victim to the pestilence of 1348, after having lived twelve years in religion. No works of these men survive; and we can only conjecture that they executed these very ancient choral books that are now preserved in the novitiate of the same convent, adorned with very small, but most graceful figures. There are very few productions more important to the history of Italian miniaturing in the first period of the Renaissance of the arts than these. The design, the colouring, and composition, manifestly announce an imitator of the Greeks, or of Cimabue. The flesh is dull and clayey. Nevertheless the countenances have an expression that is not easily found in the works of the Greeks: and the attitudes are far more graceful than these of the Greek pencil. The ornaments of the initial letters are very few and very rude. Wonderful, however, is the freshness and transparency of the colouring after the lapse of so many ages. In some places there are evidences that they have been retouched, but they are few and easily recognised. The form of the character of the books themselves, however, makes me doubt their antiquity, and it seems to me to be more recent than the miniatures. This caused the celebrated painter Camillo Pucci, who examined them with me, to believe that they belong to an epoch somewhat posterior; and as in the days of Giotto there were some who, despite the progress of the arts, still adhered obstinately to the imitation of the Greeks and of Cimabue; so, likewise, did the

niaturist of these Choral-books. The histories which I
em most worthy of consideration in them, are a Nativity
Jesus Christ, the Adoration of the Magi, the Resur-
tion and Ascension: all small pictures of good
mposition.

To this same fourteenth century belong some minia-
ists of the convent of S. Catherine at Pisa; two of
om are designated fair-writers, and they are, a Father
menico Pollini, a Sardinian, and Father Alessandro
la Spina, the inventor of spectacles. The last-named
entitled a fair-writer and miniaturist.[1] A certain Fra
tro Fieschi, and a Fra Jacopo Gualterotti are praised
painters. Were we disposed to form a pictorial ento-
logy, we might add to them Fra Guido, of S. Maria
vella, and insert them all in the number of Dominican
nters: but, where there is such a multitude of great
sts, it would be unreasonable to exhume such as have
n consigned to merited oblivion. Of the Choral-
ks of the convent of Pisa, only six are now extant in
archiepiscopal seminary, and these are so worn and
tilated, that we cannot form any notion of their
tensions.

At length came that glorious fifteenth century, in
ich the arts may be said to have reached unpre-
ented eminence in purity of design and excellence of
mposition. Miniature, too, made grand progress, and
ested itself with all the beauties and adornments
uliar to that epoch. And here, as from an elevation,

[1] Chron. Antiq. S. Cath. Ord. Præd. Pisarum, p. 16: "Fra Alexander
ina, vir modestus et bonus, quae vidit oculis facta scivit et facere.
laria AB ALIO primo facta communicare nolente, ipse fecit, et omnibus
unicavit corde hilari et volente. Cantare, scribere, miniare, et omnia
quae manus mechanicœ valent." Fra Giacomo, son of Lanfranco
terotti, died Archbishop of Turritano in 1379.

we behold a long series of able Tuscan miniaturists, who will furnish ample matter for the writer of these Memoirs. Foremost amongst these elegant masters is F. Michele Sertini della Casa, a religious of the convent of S. Maria Novella, and a Doctor of the University of Florence, who died in 1416. The chronicles of the convent, making special mention of him, bestow much praise on the two great Psalters which he miniatured and which are still preserved in the novitiate of the same house, along with these already alluded to.[1] If, in some particulars they be inferior to these in the convent of S. Mark, as far as mere adornment is concerned, their design, however, and the composition of the histories possess great merit. Having been in constant use for three centuries, and frequently retouched by some unknown hand, they are greatly injured. The frontis pieces of both are very beautiful, and of equal merit In the upper part is God the Father, in the act of creating the world: in the lower is the prophet David, who wedding the harmony of his harp to the inspired strain magnifies the wisdom and goodness of the Creator in this sublime manifestation of His divine attributes. Exquisitely beautiful are the little figures with which he adorn the hundred and ninth Psalm. Desiring to embody, as it were, the sentiment of the words, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand," he designed and coloured two figures, not precisely like, but equal, in order to denote the identity of the Divine Nature in the Father and in the Son. They are seated in gre

[1] In the time of F. Borghigiani, these Psalters were used daily in the choir of S. Maria Novella, and the tradition was, that they were miniatured by Father Sertini. The design and composition announce an artist who flourished at the beginning of the fifteenth century, or end of that which preceded. I myself believe them to be the work of the foresaid religious.

ajesty; but the Eternal, according to the vision in the pocalypse, has on His knees an open volume, where the ual Alpha and Omega are inscribed; whereas the Son lds a closed volume, and points to the wound in His side. o language of ours can adequately describe the majesty these two truly divine figures; nor can one ever tire of holding the beauty of the ample and noble robe, that, ling from the shoulders, folds itself gracefully and turally on the knees of Both. His manner of expressg the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, appears to to be quite novel; for, besides the two figures of the gel and the Virgin, he introduces the two prophets o had more distinctly enunciated the mystery of the carnation: and, in the foreground, he places two friars o, with profoundest veneration, worship the Mother God. Over the thirty-eighth Psalm he designed an cellent figure of king David, which, with others, we it for brevity's sake.

In the same century there flourished two other celeted miniaturists in the convent of S. Maria Novella. ey have honourable mention in the Chronicles and rology, but we are not sure of the works attributed them.

These were F. Biagio de Filippi, who was an eloquent preacher, and a nguished writer and miniaturist, (he died in 1510,) and Father Antonio Rossi, who, being unable to attend to other studies by reason of a long painful infirmity, devoted himself to writing and miniaturing Choralks for his convent. He died of the plague in 1495. The same novitiate sses two antiphonaries, in which there are some charming miniatures of lent composition, but, withal, imperfect in design and colouring.

the history of the church of S. Domenico at Bologna, we have an account e expenses incurred by the convent for the writing and miniaturing of horal-books, as well as books for the library; and we find a layer, named Fra Marco, employed as a writer, together with a Fra olommeo, who was a painter and miniaturist. They began to work in ; but their productions do not exist.

But it is time that we proceed to speak of the other convent, (S. Marco,) where miniature numbered some of the greatest cultivators of an art of which Italy is justly proud. Of these men we shall briefly treat in the following pages:—Alas! briefly, for during the French invasion and the suppression of the convents of the Order, not only many of the Choral-books were dispersed, but also the records which would, doubtless, have thrown much light on the history of their authors.

We will, therefore, begin with the Blessed Giovanni Dominici, of the Order of Preaching-Friars, and a Cardinal of holy Church. In every convent of the Order—whether of men or women—whose regular discipline he reformed—nay, in every convent that he built from the foundations—in each and all of them he toiled to introduce this most noble art, whose tendency is to raise the soul and the heart to chaste and holy thoughts. Many of his letters on this subject, written to the Dominican nuns of the monastery of Corpus Domini, (which he founded in Venice,) remain to attest the truth of my assertion. In these letters he directs the religious how to perfect themselves in miniaturing, and offers to complete some whose final tintings were too difficult for them.[1] To him, in my opinion, we are indebted for the great number of distinguished miniaturists who flourished in Fiesole, in S. Marco, and in the other convents of the Order. Most conspicuous of all these were the two friars of Mugello, Fra Giovanni and Fra Benedetto, so illustrious in the annals of the institute, and whom he probably received into the Order a short time before he left Florence for the court of Gregory XII., in the

[1] Commentario della Vita del C. Giovanni Bacchini, 1 vol. in fol. MS. Archiv. di S. Marco.

disastrous days of the schism. It is true that the Blessed Giovanni Angelico is chiefly known for his paintings on panel and in fresco; but that he was a most excellent miniaturist (though Vasari does not say much on the subject,) is evident from his pictures, in which we easily detect the methods and the precepts of the miniaturists. In all of them we clearly see the chaste and simple style of composition—the flowing outline, the lightness and transparency of the shading; nay, and all the graces and diligence which characterised the most perfect miniaturist And in fact it was not till the first half of the fifteenth century that painters attempted landscape; and in this particular they were preceded by the miniaturists, although the limited surface on which they worked presented great obstacles to perspective, and compelled them to fill up their back ground with straggling trees and naked mountains. The heads of their figures were full of love and life; but we cannot say as much of their extremities, which in imitation of the Greeks, they were wont to conceal. With a few strokes of the pencil they gave shape to the conceptions of their souls; and few were ever equal to them in producing such wonderful results with such limited means. From them we have learned the graceful arrangements of drapery; and in all these subjects known as tender and devout, they have eclipsed all other painters. But the beauty of their colouring, that ever changing iris, that wonderful blending of the warmest and most languid tints, that light which, despite the glitter of the gold ornamenting within and without, is almost reflected from their works, surpasses all our powers of description. Add to all this the beauty and the variety of the accessory embellishments, which in miniaturing, generally speaking, were primary characteristics; the capricious and bizarre arrangement of

fruits, flowers, animals, fantastic and symbolic figures, and not unfrequently spirited caricatures, all executed with marvellous diligence. And indeed miniature seems to have been a prelude to the study of the grotesque, in which Morto di Feltre, Giovanni da Udine, Baldassare Peruzzi, and others were so celebrated. From all this I would infer that every one even slightly acquainted with the productions of the Angelico, must recognise all these characteristics in the little works on panel which are now in the gallery of the Uffizj at Florence, in that of the Florentine Academy, and in the reliquaries of S. Maria Novella.

Treating of Fra Angelico as a miniaturist, Vasari writes thus—"Two great books divinely miniatured, richly adorned, and regarded with great veneration, are now preserved in S. Maria del Fiore. They are the work of Fra Giovanni, and are never seen save on most solemn festivals." Vainly did I seek these books in the cathedral. These that I found are from other hands, and they are manifestly the productions of the second half of the fifteenth century, or of the first half of that which followed.[1]

Continuing the life of the Angelico, Vasari says, "There are in the convent of S. Maria some Choral-books, miniatured by Fra Giovanni, so beautiful that I cannot describe them; and, like these, are some which he produced with wonderful diligence, and left in the convent of S. Dominic at Fiesole. 'Tis quite certain that an elder brother, who was a miniaturist, and had

[1] More fortunate than us, Rosini saw them, and writes thus, "The results of this employment, (miniaturing,) are the Choral-books of S. Domenico in Fiesole. Probably two of these belong to the Cathedral of Florence, and many others which have been carried away from Italy."—Storia della Pittura, v. 2, c. xvii., p. 254.

practised painting, assisted him in these works." Vasari has here fallen into some errors which, with the aid of authentic documents, we will correct. In the first place, the Choral-books in the convent of S. Marco, which Vasari attributes to Giovanni, are not his, but his brother's, as we shall see in his life. These of Fiesole are, in great part, lost; and such of them as exist have no miniatures, save a few arabesques. In Florence there are some (but outside Italy a great many more) leaves of these books, believed to be the work of Fra Giovanni; but either avarice or barbarity has sadly mutilated them, and it is not long since a German purchased one of these, which is described as containing one of the best miniatures that ever came from the great Fiesolan's pencil. A graceful wreath of fruits and flowers occupies the whole length of the page, within which, in little circlets, were twelve half-figures of the Apostles, and in the midst an Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. I believe that Fra Giovanni may have assisted his brother in miniaturing many of the books belonging to S. Mark's; and I think that he not only designed but coloured them, and that they bear all the marks of his wonderful and perfect skill. In the library of the same convent there is an ancient Dominican Missal, which Cosimo de Medici caused to be written and miniatured; and it is the second of the five that remain. It contains a miniature, by Fra Giovanni, which may be regarded as the choicest of all his works in this style. In the upper part of the first page he produced a God the Father in the clouds, in the act of blessing; and in the under part a number of saints, who are prostrate and adoring:—they are S. Dominici, S. Peter, Martyr, S. Tommasso of Aquino, S. Francesco, etc., figures that remind one of these that he painted, life

size, in the chapter room, or of these which delight us in the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin. None save those who have seen them can imagine how perfectly these little figures are made to express the love and ardent piety with which these saints raise their prayers to the Most High; for indeed every touch of his pencil is as bold and as light as it is in paintings of great dimensions. At foot of these is another circlet, having a half figure of the Redeemer bound, which recalls that in the Medicean apartment in the same convent. We have to lament that this miniature has been retouched. These that follow in the same volume seem to be the work of another miniaturist, who retouched the arabesques and histories. A third miniaturist, following the original design, not only retouched but executed, within the spaces of the initial letters, some exquisitely graceful histories, which, I think, are the work of the end of the fifteenth century. In the Festival of the Resurrection there is a reminiscence of the Marys at the sepulchre which the Angelico frescoed in the convent. In that of the Ascension, there is a group of the Apostles with the Blessed Virgin, of whom we see only the countenance; truly beautiful figures but retouched: totally untouched, however, is a half-figure of our Lord ascending into the heavens. The most beautiful of all, however, is a Descent of the Holy Ghost, which is either the work of the Angelico or of his brother; and on which happily, no profane hand has been laid.

Not knowing any other work in miniature which may be ascribed to him with certainty, we will now proceed to narrate the life and works of Fra Benedetto, who was the most distinguished master in this art; and as he applied himself to miniaturing and painting under the same cloister-roof with his brother Giovanni, the Angelic

we will not expend many words on his life, but rather confine ourselves to his productions, as we will have to speak more copiously of the former in our history of the Blessed Fra Giovanni.

CHAPTER XII.

Notices of the Life and Works of Fra Benedetto del Mugello, Miniaturist and Painter.

Fra Benedetto, (son of a certain Peter, whose cognomen is suppressed,) was born in the vast and fertile province of Mugello, near the Castle of Vicchio, which was built by the Florentine Republic, to check the audacity and ambition of the Guidi. If it be true, as Vasari states, that Fra Benedetto was older than the Angelico, we should say that he was born about 1386; but as the act of his religious profession is posterior to that of Fra Giovanni, and in the same year, I incline to think that he was younger, and that we ought to date his birth about the year 1389. From whom he learned painting does not appear, and it would be useless to try to discover it. He may have cultivated the art before taking the habit of the Order: be that as it may, he entered the convent of Fiesole in 1407, when he may have been about eighteen years of age. In the following year he made his solemn profession, probably in Cortona, and was enrolled amongst the clerks.[1] I do not know if he was

[1] Cron Conv. S. Dom. de Fesulis "Fra Benedictus Petri de Mugello juxta Vichium, Germanus prædicti frat. Joannis qui et fuit Scriptor optimus, et multos libros scripsit et notavit pro cantu: accepit habitum clericorum . . . et sequente anno fecit professionem."

in Cortona when that city was taken by Ladislaus, King of Naples, or if he had gone to Fiesole, which I think likely. If so, he must have left it in 1409, for reasons which we will hereafter recount; but he could not have returned to it sooner than 1418. All that the chaste joys of religion, added to the severe discipline of the cloister and virtuous example, could effect in a soul well inclined, appeared manifest in him. The exhortations and the whole life of his truly Angelic brother, and the eminent virtues of S. Antonino, had such decided influence on his heart, that he was soon numbered amongst the most distinguished and venerable Fathers of that convent. Indeed, we could not desire a more convincing proof of his goodness than the friendship which, through all his life, existed between him and S. Antonino; who, in his love for the two brothers of Mugello, brought them both with him to Florence, in 1437, after he had obtained the new convent of S. Marco from Cosimo de Medici. Here they resided for eight consecutive years, during which time S. Antonino, desiring to show how much he esteemed Fra Benedetto's virtues, divided the government of the religious community with him, and appointed him to be his sub-prior as often as he himself was elected to the priorship. In 1443, Cosimo de Medici, knowing his skill as an illuminator of sacred and profane books, commissioned him to write and miniature all these belonging to the church and sacristy of S. Marco. In this he was aided by some of his confreres, who were excellent caligraphists, and, with the exception of one, he completed the whole in the space of five years. This wonderful labour cost fifteen hundred ducats. The work, however, had scarcely been commenced, when the religious of S. Domenico at Fiesole elected Fra Benedetto prior of their convent; and S. Antonino, who,

at that time was vicar-general, having sanctioned the election, our good miniaturist returned to that sunny hill-side, where, in company with his brother, he had taken the habit of S. Dominic.[1] For three years he ruled that convent, and edified its religious by his example; but, before the third and last year of his guardianship arrived, he was stricken by the pestilence, and died in the year 1448, in the fifty-ninth of his age. We have not discovered the month or the place where he died; for Father Timoteo Bottonio says that he died, not in Fiesole, but in the convent of S. Marco at Florence; and, in fact, the Necrology of the latter has an entry of his decease, while that of the convent of Fiesole barely alludes to it. Perhaps, for the sake of the books which he was miniaturing for the convent of S. Marco, he may have gone to Florence, hoping to escape the pestilence when it showed itself in Fiesole. The chroniclers of both convents make brief, but honourable mention of his memory. These of Florence call him a most perfect religious, blessed in name, as well as in works; and those of Fiesole, a devout and holy man.[2] He must,

1 Chron. Conv. S. Dom. de Fesulis.

2 Fra Benedictus Petri de Mugello, filius nativus et tunc prior existens Fesulani conventus, Germanus fratris Joannis, illius tam mirandi pictoris cujus arte picturæ fere omnes hujus conventus extant. Hic re et nomine Benedictus moribus et vita integerrimus fuit, et sine querela in ordine conversatus. extitit autem excellentissimus, non modo suorum, sed et plurimorum temporum scriptor et miniator. Cujus, manu, litteris, cantus, nota et minio st. (sic) omnes fere libri chori hujus Ecclesiæ S. Marci. Antiphonaria videlicet, Gradualia et Psalteria dempto ultimo duntaxat festivo Graduali. Hic ex ea peste invasus alacer mortem intuitus, sacramentis omnibus rite perceptis in dom. requievit ipso anno 1448, sepultus in communibus fratrum sepulturis R. I. P. Annal. Conv. S. Marci.

"Fra Benedictus Petri de Mugello Germanus prædicti pictoris, (the Angelico,) obiit . . . . hic fuit egregius scriptor et scripsit pene omnes libros chori S. Marci et notavit, et aliquos etiam hic Fesulis. Fuit hic pater

also, have been sufficiently versed in sacred science and an able preacher, since the constitutions of the Order do not allow any of its members to be raised to a position of superiority without a proof of sound studies and ability for announcing the divine word; and in the fervour of that reformation which did not tolerate the defect of pious and learned men, we are not to believe that there was any infringement of its fundamental law.

Having spoken of his life, we will now turn to his works. Necessity creates arts: the pleasure that is derived from the cultivation of them gives them perfection. The want of an asylum induced the Preaching-Friars to apply themselves to architecture: that of the books necessary for the celebration of divine worship made them study miniature: the beauty of the colouring caused others to imitate them, and the art, which at first was necessary, became a delightful occupation to many, and was thus perpetuated in the Dominican cloisters.

The example of his brother Giovanni, and, mayhap, the counsels of S. Antonino, persuaded Fra Benedetto to devote himself to it. The first essay he made was in miniaturing some Choral-books belonging to the convent of S. Domenico in Fiesole, as the chronicle narrates; and, perhaps, these are the same that Vasari attributes to the Angelico. These of S. Marco, which he is said to have commenced miniaturing in 1443, and that were not finished at his death, were perfected two years afterwards by a religious of the Franciscan Order, whose name we have not ascertained. (1463.) Father Roberto Ubaldini, the writer of the chronicle of the convent of S. Marco, has made a catalogue of them; and they consist

devotus et sanctus et bono fine quievit in domino," (here we see the caligraphist confounded with the miniaturist.)—Necrol. Conv. S. Dominici. Fes.

of fourteen volumes, between Graduals and Antiphonaries, all written and miniatured by his own hand, with the exception of the last volume of the Festive Gradual, and, perhaps, three volumes of the Ferial Gradual, which death did not allow him to complete; but which, according to Ubaldini, were miniatured by a religious of the Minorites.[1] The same Ubaldino, speaking again, (in another part of the chronicle,) of these books, excepts only the Festive Gradual.[2] From this we infer that only the one last-named can with certainty be attributed to the Franciscan. Fra Benedetto also wrote and miniatured the two Psalters, some Missals, and the book of the Invitatoria, which is not illuminated.[3] These books are not, as M. Rio says, lost, but are used daily by the religious, and,

[1] Annal. Conv. S. Marci. "Nam 14 volumina Gradualium, et Antiphonariorum scripta sunt manu supradicti fratris Benedicti prioris conventus Fesulani, excepto ultimo volumine Gradualis festivi, et tribus voluminibus Gradualis ferialis quæ imperfecta remanserunt propter super venientem mortem: quæ postea completa fuerunt per quemdam Ordinis Minorum. Sed et tam conventui Fesulano ratione primi scriptoris; quam secundo scriptori satisfactum semper successive fuit a Domino Cosma. Scripsit similiter idem frat. Benedictus duo Psalteria chori, requirente eodem Cosma, et librum invitatoriorum." As there is here an allusion to two different writers in Fiesole and S. Marco, a doubt arises whether we should credit the chronicler of Fiesole in preference to him of S. Marco.

[2] V. The obituary already cited.

[3] Amongst the MS. in the library of S. Marco, there are five Missals, two Psalters, some Breviaries, and an Office of the B. V., all miniatured. The two Psalters are evidently the work of Fra Benedetto, and the little miniatures that adorn them are very beautiful, but in great part retouched. Some of the Missals are the work of an unskilful hand; and the Office of the B. V., which must have been splendidly illuminated, is so deformed by retouching, that we can scarcely recognise a vestige of its primitive beauty. On the fourth and sixth Missal, we read, "This Missal belongs to the Dominican convent of S. Marco, at Florence; and Cosmos John de Medici caused it to be executed." In the third, we find the arms of the Medici, and an exquisite Epiphany, with other miniatures, which, I think, are by a hand not inferior to Fra Benedetto's.

not counting the two Psalters and the Missals, they make altogether twenty. The increase of six is posterior to the times of the annalist, for some of them being very large, were divided into two; but it should be remarked that three of them have no miniatures. These that I think certainly belong to Fra Benedetto, are marked with the letters of the alphabet from A to I. The two first, (the Gradual of the Saints,) are the richest in decoration and histories, and, we may also add, the most elaborate. The title page of the first has the Medicean arms and the following miniatures, videlicet: Jesus, calling Peter and Andrew to the apostolate—the Stoning of S. Stephen, where there is a beautiful landscape, exquisitely tinted—S. John the Evangelist—a figure elegantly designed and coloured, but much worn by attrition, and still more by the audacity of some hand that presumed to restore it. In the gold ornaments of the initial letter there is an inscription, of which I could read only the following words, which remove all doubt as to their origin: . . . "*hos libros suis pecuniis, illustrissimus civis . . . multa et magna beneficia, et hoc templum extruxit Cosmas Medici*"—then follow a Slaughter of the Innocents—a most beautiful figure of S. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr—the Conversion of S. Paul, the design of which is weak, but the perspective admirable—a Purification of the Virgin, somewhat inferior to the others—and a charming Annunciation. In the Common of Apostles and Martyrs he repeats the same conception: that is to say, Jesus Christ blessing the Apostles, Martyrs, and Virgins. But surpassing all these in diligence and excellence of colouring is a Crucifixion, over the votive Office of the Cross. In the second volume, marked with the letter B., there is an Annunciation of considerable dimensions—then follow the Martyrdom of S. Peter of

Verona, the Dominican—a little S. John, conducted by an angel into the desert, admirably designed, and still more admirable for its colouring — and a S. Peter the Apostle, opening the gate of heaven to a sanctified soul. In the ornaments of the initial letter there is an inscription, (hard to be deciphered,) which tells that the convent of S. Marco was founded by the Medici. It is somewhat of the same character as the Latin inscription already quoted. We cannot but admire Fra Benedetto for frequently reminding us of the benefits which our religious received from that great family. It is a sign of a soul grateful for kindness. At the Festival of S. Mary Magdalene he produced a choir of angels carrying the holy penitent to heaven; a conception which was transmitted from the Greeks to the Giottesque, and which, for many ages, was most agreeable to Christian art. At the Feast of S. Domenico, he painted a most beautiful figure of the Founder of the Preaching-Friars. Equally beautiful are an Assumption and a Nativity of the blessed Virgin, which follow. But excelling all in correctness of design and perfect execution, is a figure of S. Michael Archangel. For sake of brevity, we will omit these of the other volumes. But to show how admirable was Fra Benedetto in the composition of his little pictures, I will select two miniatures; the first of which, prefixed to the Common of a Martyr in the second volume, represents a saint in the act of being decollated by the executioner, and Jesus Christ, to encourage the martyr, placing His left hand on his head, and pointing to heaven with the right. But still more beautiful is that in the first page of a volume marked I. (an Antiphonary,) in which he desired to illustrate the passage of the Gospel where our Lord foretells all the sufferings his Apostles should have to endure after His

return to heaven. The better to embody this conception, he placed before the Redeemer and the apostles the figure of a youth with his eyes bandaged and his hands tied behind his back, in the act of being slain. And truly does this figure, in presence of the astonished disciples, realise the beautiful idea of the painter. The whole is so admirably designed and coloured, that we do not hesitate to pronounce it one of the most exquisite of all the works in miniature. In the other volumes we find only one history in the frontal page. But whosoever would desire to find all the beauties and graces which he expended on such an immense number of miniatures, epitomised in one work, must see his wonderful Adoration of the Magi, which adorns the first volume of the Festive Gradual. This will convince us of his eminent skill in this branch of painting. He must also contemplate the first page of this very volume, where composition, design, colouring, and the vast variety of ornamentation, prove him to have been a most perfect master of miniature. This Adoration of the Magi is a happy imitation of that more divine than human work of the Angelico, which adorns the apartment of the Medici in the convent of S. Marco.

Fra Benedetto was equal to his brother in the beautiful details of drapery; and most diligent in the elaboration of the heads. In the extremities, however, he is most negligent, a defect common to the miniaturists of that age. In the celestial traits of the countenances he does not equal the Angelico, although his are noble and expressive. He appears to me to be feeble in design, but most happy in composing and grouping his figures. In colouring he equals the best miniaturists, and as to perspective, considering the period, he is not excelled by any. It would be difficult to believe that he was not

assisted by his brother in his designs, since nearly all his miniatures are repetitions of the paintings of the Angelico, with some variations. In his ornaments of fruits, flowers, and animals, he is more monotonous than rich, but in these particulars he faithfully followed the conventional style of the fourteenth century. It was only in the sixteenth that these details reached their marvellous perfection. In the embellishments of nearly all these volumes we occasionally find ridiculous caricatures, which are surely not to be desired in such works. But in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they were very common in painting and sculpture, particularly outside Italy; and the spirit of the age countenanced such licenses. Finally let us advert that about the middle of the sixteenth century all these books were restored in the letters, notes, and figures by another miniaturist, of whom we shall have occasion to speak very soon; and, perhaps, it is to him that we should attribute the imperfection of the extremities. Comparing the Choral-books of the duomo of Siena, with those of S. Marco, it appears to us that with the exception of such as were miniatured by Liberale da Verona, a painter and miniaturist of the sixteenth century, these by Benedetto da Matera, a Benedictine monk, and these by Fra Mattei, the Servite, and Ansano di Pietro of Siena, they are inferior in design and composition to the works of Fra Benedetto of Mugello, and excel them only in their most rich and beautiful ornamentations. His have been injured by retouchings and daily use through four centuries, whereas these of the cathedral of Siena have been preserved with the greatest care and diligence.[1]

[1] I know not how Vasari, in his life of Agnolo Gaddi, could have written that "Pietro da Perugia miniatured all the books that are in the library of

It now remains for us to speak of Fra Benedetto as a cultivator of historical painting; since many think that he assisted his brother in the innumerable series of his productions; as it would appear almost incredible that the Angelico alone could have laboured so constantly and so diligently. To this let us add what Vasari says of Fra Benedetto, when writing the life of the Angelico, videlicet, "that he was most skilful as a painter;" and, in fact, the precepts as well as the example of such a master were well calculated to advance him to perfection. Professor Rosini in his recent and previous history of Italian painting, thinks that he has discovered the method of distinguishing the productions of Fra Giovanni from these of his brother; and having observed that some by the former have more of gold ornamenting than these of the latter, he conjectures that the first are by the Angelico, and the second by his brother.[1] But this opinion of the illustrious professor does not appear well founded; since the greater or lesser quantity of gold employed by painters at that period depended more on the will of the persons who employed them, than on the means which the artists possessed. And, in fact, in a contract entered into between Fra Giovanni and a merchant, concerning the painting of a tabernacle, there is special mention of the amount of gold and silver agreed upon. Wherefore, if Fra Benedetto practised painting on panel and on fresco, his works must be sought amongst the feebler ones usually attributed to the Angelico; and especially in some frescos in the cells of the convent of S. Marco, which are certainly inferior to these of Giovanni. And since such

Pius II., attached to the Cathedral of Siena," as the variety of style clearly proves a variety of miniaturists, some of whom, like Liberale, and Ansano di Pietro, subscribed their names to them.

[1] Storia della Pittura Italiana, Vol. II., ch. xvii., p. 257.

was the modesty of these distinguished painters, that they never signed their productions with their names; and that even now it is difficult to distinguish the works of the one from these of the other, we will allow a common glory to fall on the twain.

It is not ascertained whether Fra Benedetto, at the time of his death, had brought up any pupil in miniaturing amongst the religious of the convent of S. Marco, or that of Fiesole. An heir, however, of his name, of his art, and his virtues appeared in the former convent towards the close of the fifteenth century. We cannot, however, point out any of his works with certainty, as they are not mentioned in the Chronicles. They record, nevertheless, a passage in his life, which shall always associate the name of this artist with that of a GREAT and UNFORTUNATE MAN.

This was Fra Benedetto, the son of a certain Paul, a Florentine, who, according to the usage of the times was known by the diminutive Bettuccio. In his youth he was amongst the impassioned admirers of Girolamo Savonarola—and where was the noble genius or excellent artist who, in those days, could have been insensible to the fascinating eloquence, and splendid virtues of the Republican Friar? Like Della Porta, Credi Robbia, Cronaca, and others, Bettuccio loved and reverenced the Ferrarese; and he was amongst the first of those whom Savonarola induced to take the habit of S. Dominic. On the 7th of November, 1495, when Fra Girolamo was Vicar-General of the congregation of S. Marco, he was admitted to the Order, and on the 13th of November, of the following year, he made his solemn profession. Bound to him by every tie of love and veneration, he did not abandon him in the hour of his saddest sorrow.

When the faction of the "Arrabbiati,"[1] thirsting for Savonarola's blood, came to tear their victim from his convent, Burlamacchi (who knew them both,) describes how Fra Benedetto, armed to the teeth, joined the Piagnoni in defending the life so dear to him; and how Savonarola caused him to throw away his weapons, saying that these of a religious should be spiritual, not material. But when Fra Benedetto saw him carried off to prison, he made every effort to go along with him, and when they refused him, he still importuned to be allowed to share his fate: but Fra Girolamo turning to him, said "Fra Benedetto I command you not to come, for Fra Domenico and I must die for the love of Christ." "And then he was torn from the eyes of his children, who were all weeping. This was at nine of the night."[2] It is consoling to be able to record these memories of an artist possessing such gratitude, in an age so chary of generous and heroic examples.

More than this we do not know of him. Perhaps he miniatured the books of the library of S. Marco, or others that have been transferred to the Laurenziana, but we cannot point with certainty to any of his productions in this branch of design.

[1] The Arrabbiati (the Frantic) were the parties opposed to the reforms in government and morality advocated by Fra Girolamo Savonarola, and they were composed of the gentry and nobles, who, hating the Medicean dynasty, contemplated the establishment of an oligarchy. The Piagnoni (Mourners) were those who lamented the decay of liberty and morality, and joined the *democratic* friar in his efforts to overthrow the splendid tyranny of the Medici.

[2] Vita del P. F. Girolamo Savonarola scritta dal P. Pacifico Burlamacchi. Lucca, 1764. 1 vol. v. p. 136, 143.

CHAP. XIII.

Fra Eustachio, and Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano, Tuscan Miniaturists of the Sixteenth Century.

The art of illuminating parchments, which for many ages had enriched the cloisters and libraries with so many and such rare works, was approaching its decline at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Timid and unnoticed, but withal ambitious to displace it, engraving had begun its glorious career in the middle of the preceding century: at first by poor and ignoble attempts on wood, till, as it were, taking courage, it developed itself in the wonderful works on copper by Albert Dürer and Marc' Antonio Raimondi. Nevertheless, it is in these last days of its existence that we must seek the grand Italian miniaturists, who, having corrected the design of both figures and ornaments, giving greater vigour to the colouring and greater relief to the bodies, by means of chiaroscuro, carried this most beautiful art to its perfection. Neither could it have closed its history with more glorious names than these of Gerolamo, "*dai libri*," (of the books,) Liberale da Verona, and Giulo Clovio. The sixteenth century, that was destined to terminate the series of its cultivators, presents to us some who possessed wonderful ability in this branch. Amongst the foremost of them was Fra Filippo Lappaccini, a Florentine, and religious of the convent of S. Marco, who took the Dominican habit in 1492, and died in 1535. We have no work which can be attributed to him with certainty; all that we have been able to learn is, that not being able to apply himself to sacred studies, he determined, like many other artists of that convent, to

remain a deacon, and devote all his time to writing and miniaturing Choral-books, in which occupation, says F. Serafino Razzi, he exhibited marvellous skill.[1]

Lappaccini had been but three years professed when he was joined by one of the greatest miniaturists of whom Italy is justly proud; and of whose works, happily, we possess many remains. If it be allowed us to compare great things with small, he is the Porta of miniature, as Fra Benedetto del Mugello may be called its Angelico. They were both exceedingly eminent masters: the one in simplicity and devout tenderness, the other in his delineations of nature, in grandeur of design, and, above all, in the character of his ornamentations, which we may term exquisite and Raffaellesque. His name was Fra Eustachio, his birth-place Florence, his father Baldassare, and his cognomen unknown. He was born in 1473; in the world he was called Thomas. Like the other miniaturists of S. Marco, he received the lay-brother's habit from the hands of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, in 1496, and twenty-third of his age. In the year following, on account of the pestilence in Florence, Savonarola, then vicar-general, conducted his novices to the villa of Gondi, and amongst them was Fra Eustachio. There the miniaturist pronounced his solemn vows in September, 1497.[2] If the historians of art do not mention him, (and a feeling of gratitude should have prompted Vasari to do so,) we can learn enough of him from those of the Order. Father Bottonio, who knew him in Florence, speaks thus of him in his Annals—"Fra Eustachio, a lay-brother of Florence, was a rarely-gifted genius; he was an excellent minia-

[1] Cronaca della Provincia Romana dell' Ordine de' Predicatori, scritta dal P. Serafino Razzi.

[2] Annal. S. Marci, "Fr. Eustachius antea Thomas Balthassaris, florent. conversus. hic accepit habitum anno æt. suæ 23 completo."

turist, and produced very beautiful works, especially a large and exquisite Psalter, that is now used in the choir of S. Marco. He had a prodigious memory, and although decrepid, he recited from memory long passages of the Commedia Divina, which he thoroughly understood. When Vasari was writing the Lives of the Painters, he came frequently to this old man and learned from him many particulars of the great and most illustrious artists. He walked through the convent supporting himself on a staff; and I remember me that he was greatly in dread of the agony of death: though, sooth to say, his departure from this world was sweet and placid, as I myself witnessed. Aged 83 years, he died September 25."[1] He is similarly recorded by Father Serafino Razzi, and by the continuator of the Annals of S. Marco.[2] The Psalter of which Bottonio speaks, exists, and is used daily by the religious of the said church. The first page is most gracefully embellished; and in the initial letter there is a half figure of Isaia, over whose head is suspended a scroll, on which we read—"Ari. Dri. M. V. V.," there is no trace of any intermediary number: and, perhaps, the good lay-brothers meant to write M. D. V. Here we do not find the armorial bearings of the Medici; a clear proof that this book was not due to their generosity; for at that period there was

[1] Annal. MSS.

[2] Istoria degli Uomini Illustri del sac. Ord, dei Predicatori scritta dal P. Serafino Razzi: "Fra Eustachio of S. Marco was an excellent miniaturist, as may be seen by the two great Psalters that are used on the high festivals in S. Marco. He recited long passages of Dante from memory. He sang each night, after supper, according to usage, some devout canticles for the community. He died in 1555."

Annal. conv. S. Marci, "Hic fuit, ni fallor, egregius miniator, id quod inter alia ipsius opera, Psalterii liber in dextera nostri chori parte locatus facile attestatur.

nothing however insignificant, attributable to this family, that would not have borne their cognizances. But the great excellence of Fra Eustachio is plainly visible in his illumination of the first Psalm. A rich ornament of flowers and most elegant arabesques all in gold, on a ground of azure and crimson, occupies the whole length of the page; the flowers and volutes support some groups of angels—nude, but well designed; and here and there are little circles at equal distances, which diminish the uniformity of design. In the two above and below he miniatured half figures of the four Doctors of the Latin Church, videlicet, Pope S. Leo, S. Jerom, S. Augustin, S. Ambrose, all of which show evident marks of the greatest diligence. In the centre, on the right and left, are two most graceful animals. At bottom of the page is a figure of S. Catherine of Siena, but so injured as to be scarcely recognisable. In the initial letter he produced a landscape of beautiful perspective with Mount Sion; and this is a repetition of a similar one by Fra Benedetto. In the midst of a radiant champaign under the azure and limpid sky, he represents David prostrate with hands folded on his bosom, and his crown lying in the dust, in the act of listening to the voice of God, who from the highest heavens is seen shedding His consoling light on the prophet: the figure of David is full of majesty and life, and the beauty of the drapery reminds us of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta. The extremities are not well proportioned, nor sufficiently worked out: a defect to be found in most miniaturists. That Fra Eustachio understood well the laws of design is clearly proved by the nude of the angels, which is most correctly executed.

To illustrate the thirty-eighth Psalm, he produced a half figure of king David, with the fore-finger on his

mouth to indicate silence; but I think Father Sertini's style of shaping the same thought, far more happy. He represents David seated in great majesty, and placing the summit of the regal sceptre on his lips. But nothing can excel the beautiful idea of Fra Eustachio, or his mode of embodying it, when he illustrates that passage of the thirteenth Psalm, where the impious insults the Almighty—"The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God."—Here he designed and exquisitely coloured a young man, sumptuously attired, reeling in the drunkenness of the senses, who, because he values or fears for nothing in the world, save his pleasures, holds a sparrow-hawk on his right hand, and raises the other contemptuously to heaven. At the hundred and ninth Psalm, ("The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand,") he pourtrayed the Eternal holding in His arms the lifeless form of His only Son. An excellent miniature, but so injured by attrition that it must soon perish. Here we have unmistakable evidence of the superiority of the Giotto school in the composition of their sacred pictures; for the foresaid Father Sertini produced that most beautiful miniature mentioned in the first chapter, at the same Psalm in the Psalters of S. Maria Novella. For sake of brevity, we omit some others of the same volume. From this short notice, every one will be able to form some estimate of the ability of Fra Eustachio, whom I do not hesitate to compare to Liberale da Verona in the selection of subjects, and to whom he is vastly superior in embellishments and arabesques; such is the elegance and purity with which they are designed, not to speak of the transparency of their colouring. Nor would we err in saying that the design of these miniatures is due to Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, who, in the days of Fra Eus-

tachio, and in this very convent of S. Marco, executed his wonderful paintings. Fathers Razzi and Bottonio affirm that our miniaturist painted large subjects, but they do not mention when or where. Father Richa attributes to him the miniatures of the Choral-books belonging to the cathedral of Florence; of which, however, he must have executed only a part, their number being very considerable, and manifestly the work of various miniaturists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[1] It is certain, nevertheless, that Fra Eustachio miniatured four books for the choir of S. Maria della Quercia, near Viterbo, as they are mentioned in the Chronicles of that convent. I am assured that they still exist, but not having seen them, I cannot speak of them.[2]

We have now to speak of Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano, with whom we will close this sketch of the Dominican miniaturists. We are ignorant of the year in which this religious was born, of his cognomen and parents; we know simply that he was born in Tramoggiano, a little hamlet of Casentino, on the slopes of the Apennines. He was a priest, and probably affiliated to the convent of S. Maria del Sasso, near Bibbiena, where he was six times elected prior. That he was an excellent miniaturist appears from the Chronicles of the Order; but we could not with certainty point out any work in miniature from his pencil. The continuator of the Annals of S. Marco writes that, in the year 1577, a certain Father Antonio Caffarelli desired to have all the Choral-books of that convent restored, as they had been much injured by daily use. Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano was invited to perform this work, and, at his instance, they were

[1] Notizie Istoriche, etc., v. 7.

[2] Libro delle Chroniche della Chiesa e Sacristia del Convento della Quercia. (MS. in the archives of that convent.)

newly bound; the largest of them divided; the miniaturing and text restored wherever necessary; and all additions that the times and liturgy required inserted. He was employed at these restorations from 1577 to 1578. Some question having arisen between him and the superior of the convent, the miniaturist set out from Florence, nor did he return till F. Filippo Brandolini was elected to that office, under whom, with the exception of one, he finished the restoration of all these books.[1] I am quite certain that the miniatures of Fra Benedetto del Mugello sustained no damage, as is usually the case in all retouchings executed by the ablest artist. The painters, as well as miniaturists of the sixteenth century regarded the colouring of the Quattrocentisti as too weak and diluted, their outlines too narrow, and the design of the nude miserable; hence, in their restorations they did not hesitate to alter both the one and the other, to the great injury of the works of these reflecting and chastened painters.

Father Serafino Razzi, who may have known Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano, does not mention any of his works with certainty.[2] For what we know of him, we are indebted to F. V. Fineschi, who speaks of him thus in his little work:—"I cannot omit to mention the most beautiful Choral-books, (of the convent of S. Maria del Sasso,) so admirably miniatured by Fra Pietro da Tramoggiano, who was prior of this convent; and who, along with his other merits, had also that of being an excellent writer of Choral-books, by which art he gained much money, which he expended in the collection of all

[1] Annal, Conv. S. Marci, fol. 45.
[2] Cronica della Provincia Romana.

the books necessary for the choir. They make, altogether, fourteen, have beautiful miniatures, and were valued at more than fifteen hundred dollars.[1] In a note Fineschi informs us that some of these miniatures were cut out and carried away. I know not what became of these Choral-books, which were so likely to prove the high merits of Fra Pietro. The convent of Bibbiena possesses only one, and this has no work of miniature. I am informed, however, that some of them have been transferred to the church of S. Maria Novella. He died in the year 1596, probably in the convent of Bibbiena, where he had spent the greater part of his life.

We might add to the series of Dominican miniaturists some Nuns of the same Order, who successfully cultivated this branch of art; but they shall find a place amongst the paintresses, of whom we will speak in the second volume of this work.

Recapitulating all that we have hitherto said in this first book, concerning the artists of the Order of Preaching-Friars, we think we have shown that, in genius and ability, they rivalled the most celebrated men of their age. Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro divided the laurels with Arnolfo; Fra Guglielmo Agnelli with the disciples of Niccola Pisano; Fra Giovanni da Campi and Fra Jacopo Talenti with Taddeo Gaddi and Orgagna; and Fra Benedetto del Mugello and Fra Eustachio with Liberale da Verona. So much so, that, during three centuries, art derived splendour and progress from them; not only in

[1] Compend. Storico-Critico on two images of Most Holy Mary, which are venerated in the church of the Dominicans (S. Maria del Sasso near Bibbiena), by F. Fineschi. Florence, 1792.

private works, but in public, in Florence, in Pisa, in Orvieto, in Rome, Bologna, and the Venetian dominions. The second book of this work, as well as those that follow, will show whether they deserve the same eulogium as painters.

END OF BOOK I.

BOOK II.

Eminent Painters of the Dominican Order.

CHAPTER I.

FRA ANGELICO.

INTRODUCTION.

At a very early period of the fifteenth century Italian arts had obtained the most happy results in almost all the branches of design. Whosoever calls to mind their very miserable condition under the empire of the Greeks, and contemplates them in this period of glory, must desire to know by what ways and means they arrived at such rare excellence. The genius of three men, Niccolo, Giotto, and Arnolfo, was sufficient for this grand consummation; and their numerous and noble descendants, giving an impulse to that movement, in a very short time covered Italy from one extremity to the other with divine and marvellous works. Their titles to celebrity are to be found in the cathedrals of Siena, Florence, Orvieto, Padua, Assisi, in the Campo Santo of Pisa, and on the gates of the baptistery at Florence.[1] These, indeed, are works that challenge every age that

[1] They are the work of Lorenzo Ghiberti—

——————— "Sit thee down awhile;
There, by the gates so marvellously wrought,
That they might serve to be the gates of heaven,
Enter the Baptistery."—*Rogers' Italy.*

passes, to produce monuments excelling them in beauty and in number. For my part I love to trace the causes of this happy development of human genius to our civil, religious, and political history. For if it be true that the arts are the most eloquent language of a people, as it progresses from barbarism to refinement, it must necessarily imprint on arts as well as letters, the marks of all these stages through which it had to pass. And in my judgment nothing is more calculated to exhibit the abject state of Italy in the middle ages than the influence which the Byzantines exercised on our arts; for as we were subjugated to barbarous laws and barbarous rulers, so do all the works of painting, sculpture, and architecture, produced in that age, present evidences of that ignominious servitude which Italian genius and Italian liberty had to endure. But when Italy flung off the shackles of feudalism, enacted her own laws, and assumed a position which caused her to be feared and respected; first came Niccola, and then Giotto, to supersede the teaching and types of the Byzantines. At the commencement of the fifteenth century—turbulent and bloody by reason of the political and religious questions that agitated it—the arts seemed to be disturbed and divided, some wishing to follow the progressive movement of the age; whereas, others desired to adhere, obstinately, to old principles; believing that the sources of these inspirations, which up to that period, had produced so many sublime works were not exhausted; and not knowing what might be the result of contemning these traditions, which it had been their chief study to maintain and diffuse for many ages. In a word, the old Republican society, with its great vices and great virtues; its faith and patriotism seems to me to have been represented by the disciples of the Giottesque school;

whereas social refinement with its new political and philosophical systems—its Medicean splendour, and laxity of morals—heralded the artists of the fourteenth century, as well as those who followed them in the succeeding age. Whosoever wishes to investigate this identification of art with Italian refinement, even in ages nearer to our own, will find it rigidly exact. But since in our times much has been written concerning ancient art, its tendency and nature; we will say a few words on the subject which will be calculated to throw some light on the actual state of Italian painting at the period when Fra Giovanni Angelico began to colour his devout conceptions.

Art in every age was primarily devoted to religion. After religion it was employed to cater to the luxury of the great, and the pleasures of the people. According to the nature of both it assumed a varied configuration, and a varied existence. Hence, amongst the Egyptians it imaged a people disgraced by revolting and cruel rites, or meanly bending beneath the yoke of their tyrants. In this instance it was not the office of art to admonish or delight that people, but rather to mystify and appal them. Whilst Paganism animated all nature with beauteous and fascinating developments, the Eastern nations, and more especially the Egyptians, delighted in foul and revolting divinities, and shrouded their religious tenets with myths and mysterious symbols. With them art was truly symbolical and orgic—a pasture for deluded souls and corrupted hearts. Under the radiant skies of Greece, amongst a mighty people gifted with exquisite perceptions of the beautiful, art drew inspiration from the voluptuous and poetic theogeny of Hesiod and Homer, and developed itself in these light and graceful forms which made other people despair of ever rivalling their sublimity

and elegance. But it was seldom or never employed to correct or reform morality: its office being chiefly to please depraved and vitiated tastes. Amongst the Romans it embodied the genius of conquest, and, as it were, historied their wars and triumphs. Abandoning simplicity and gentleness, it aspired to the splendour of magnificence, and sowed the seeds of that tremendous ruin which ten centuries were not able to arrest. At length Christianity came to elevate it to a position of greatness never dreamt of, for it gave a new character to art, making it a holy medium for instructing the people in the truth, and enamouring them of virtue, associating it with all its joys and sorrows, and opening to it beyond the sensible world, a vast field utterly unknown to the Gentiles. Born amidst the sepulchres of the martyrs, nourished by the faith of the first Christians, deriving inspiration from the Gospels and the Canticles of the prophets, taking little interest in mere beauty of the outward form, its grand aim was to adumbrate the chaste joys of heaven, to make man look with contempt on this evanescent scene, and to console him in his tribulations, whilst it disdained to minister to the lusts of the great and powerful voluptuaries of the world. A sweet, eloquent, and melancholy comfortress, it adapted itself to all these forms, and to all these conceptions which were suggested by faith, hope, and love. Ever and anon it smote man's heart like the living word; and seldom did tears flow more abundantly, seldom did the human bosom experience more delicious throbbings, or the soul such sublime ecstacies, as in presence of a painting stamped with the ardent faith of these happy ages. The Egyptians made art a medium for inspiring terror—the Greek employed it for his refined voluptuousness—the Roman made it subservient to glory, but Christianity sanc-

tified and made it the teacher and the consoler of her people.

And here we deem it well to advert, that without ever altering its inmost nature, in all its peregrinations amongst such varieties of race, it always accommodated itself to the genius of the people and the circumstances of the times. In the catacombs, it pictured the days of its sorrow; in the Roman basilicas, the joy of its triumphs; in Constantinople, it decked itself with the barbaric luxury of a degenerate people; during the invasion of the Barbarians, it revived memories of the gloomy days when it struggled into light, once more converting itself into a comfortress; till at last, in the Renaissance, history, pious legends, and popular songs, became the fountain-springs of its inspiration. The following canons, however, which may be said to be the dogmatic portion of art were always held inviolably.—Its primary object should always be, not so much to please as to instruct and move; in other words, delight was to be regarded as the means, not the end; and the conception was to be embodied in the clearest and most simple manner possible: nor were there to be any accessories to disturb the moral or religious effect of the subject represented.—The artist was to be allowed ample liberty, and the use of all these means which he deemed necessary for the end he had in view, despite the severity of history and criticism.—The entire subject should appeal to the soul and the heart of the spectator; and wherever the artist was not able to achieve this, he should introduce plain and intelligible symbols; which proving insufficient, he might cull passages from the Bible, and inscribe them in a fitting place.[1]—In all

[1] This will account for the usage that prevailed amongst the ancients, of associating the *words* with the picture. It is also a proof that Christianity regarded painting as a most happy medium of imparting instruction to the

paintings exposed to the veneration of the faithful, he was to delineate the Saints, not as mere men in the state of transition, but surrounded by celestial glory; and in painting these, and more particularly still, the effigies of our Divine Redeemer and the Virgin, he should never make portraits of living people, as such should necessarily distract and diminish the devotion of the worshipper.—The most rigid decency was to be observed at all times.—The artist was always to abhor immoral subjects, and ever to bear in mind that Christian art was a divine inspiration, and that no one could undertake to produce the semblance of the Saints, and the chaste joys of Paradise, without a pure heart, lively faith, ardent charity, and fervid prayer. To these general rules were added a few particular ones regarding types, traditions, and subjects. Thus, in the pictures of the Byzantines, we always recognise severe majesty: nor would it appear that they ever aspired after tenderness and grace, but sought rather to inspire profound veneration mixed with terror, such as one must experience in presence of these Virgins and massive crucifixes, with their great and tremendous eyes. On the other hand, in the productions of the Italians, when they did not wish to be merely servile imitators of the Greeks in the middle ages, we find greater softness in the lines, a far more spontaneous movement of the person, and a desire to fill the spectator with filial reverence, and loving confidence in those whose effigies they pourtrayed.

These, if we do not err, are the principal characteristics of this art, more or less faithfully maintained down to the fifteenth century; but since it was not so exclusively

literate and illiterate. The Giottesque school was very partial to this introduction of the words which are so well calculated to convey the idea of the artist.

intent on feeding the mind with high and holy ideas, as to spurn every extrinsic perfection, such as the management of lights and shadows, perspective, and all the noble theories of art, it did not fail, during that century, or at the commencement of the following, to correct and improve design, colouring, perspective, etc.; till with Perugino and Raffaello it reached that supreme excellence of conception and form, than which nothing further was to be desiderated. To appreciate its worth and nobility, I believe that one requires nothing more than a heart sensible to the chaste joys of religion, a soul freed from prejudices, and an eye that is not easily seduced by the fascination of charming tints, or by the theatrical compositions of times far removed from the venerable simplicity of the ancients. We may say, however, of all the schools that followed, that their paintings, once or twice seen, produce satiety, whilst we never tire of beholding these of the former; and that no one can seriously contemplate them without immediately feeling their influence on his soul, like a word of peace and comfort.

The learned investigators of its history (leaving most remote times out of the question) beheld it revived and propagated in Italy by the miniaturists; and since it impressed itself with more devout affection, and derived more strength from heavenly meditations in the mountains of Umbria, on the slopes of Fiesole, and in Bologna, than elsewhere, they gave it the name of Mystic; a name so appropriate that we shall use no other, but by no means refuse it to all these artists of the Roman, Sienese, and Florentine Schools, who cultivated this style. Umbria points to Oderigi da Gubbio, the miniaturist, to entile da Fabriano, Perugino, and others as founders of his school in their country. Bologna is justly proud of

Franco, (the same whom Dante records with Oderigi,) of Vitale, Avanzi, Simone dai Crocifissi, Lippo Dalmasio, S. Catherine, Francia, etc. The Fiesolan school was supereminently illustrious in the two brothers of Mugello, Fra Benedetto and Fra Giovanni the Angelic; and I would say that, in *mysticism*, these two were equalled by Pietro Cavallini, the Roman, and Spinello, of Arezzo. Truly, they formed a glorious band, and many of them were remarkable for the sanctity of their lives. I verily believe that art was never cultivated with greater veneration than in this school of the *mystics*; and that it nowhere else exercised such salutary influences on the hearts of its devotees. Hence it was that Lippo Dalmasio (not to mention many others) never set about painting a picture of the Virgin without fasting on the day preceding his work, and partaking of the Holy Eucharist. Vasari, writing of Pietro Cavallini, tells us that "he was not only a good Christian, but a most devout friend of the poor; and much loved for his goodness, not only in Rome, his birth-place, but by every one who had any knowledge of him or his works. In his old age he so gave himself up to religion, and led such an exemplary life, that he was reputed a saint."[1] Never have I been able to contemplate the few but sublime remains of his works without thinking of the Angelico, whom he resembled by his genius and virtues; and whom, according to the estimate of his cotemporaries, he is said to have equalled.

This school, at first, so timid and reserved, that it seemed to shun, or sink beneath the greater difficulties of design, was, nevertheless, of such a noble order, that it did not hesitate to attempt the epic and historical, and

[1] Lives of the painters, etc. Life of Pietro Cavallini.

to rival the poesy of Allighieri in power and beauty. The subjects selected were numerous and varied, such, for example, as the History of the Creation, the Life of Jesus Christ, the Two Last Things, Paradise and Hell, with which they covered the walls of the burial-grounds, (Campi Santi) cloisters, and chapter-rooms; but nowhere did the Christian painter show such power as in the legends of the Blessed Virgin. Here the theories of art availed little. Before such judges as the people of the middle ages, with their glowing faith, who loved religion, and venerated the Queen of Angels with a worship at once poetical and affectionate, the artist who would do justice to his subject, should study all the avenues to the heart, and participate of that sacred enthusiasm which was cherished by the populace. His work worthily achieved, what was his reward? The sobs and tears of devout worshippers, and the benediction of the sensitive multitude! The legends of the B. V. were succeeded by these of the Saints, written, probably, by Blessed Jacopo Varzze, Metafraste and Cesario; and it is wonderful how these stories, that our age spurns, furnished the Giottesque school with so many beauties, and supplied the piety of the Christian people for many ages with sweetest pasture. Occasionally the painter drew his inspiration from the great poets, and applied himself to illustrate the "Divina Commedia" and the pages of Petrarch's "Triumph."

Nor was symbolic painting less poetical, or less productive, of grand, moral, and religious precepts. Transmitted by the Greeks, and embellished by the Italians, it, for a long time, exercised the genius of the sculptor and the painter, and wonderfully assisted the artist in developing his conceptions. It was an eloquent

language, and so peculiar to Christian art, that we cannot penetrate its innermost nature, without fully comprehending it.

But Christianity, after having re-created architecture—after having breathed the breath of life into marble, in the works of the Pisans, after educating and encouraging miniature, painting on glass, and mosaic—after watching over the birth of engraving, and opening a new school of mystic painting, had scarcely arrived at the end of the fifteenth century, when it beheld its works despised, and almost destroyed in the sixteenth. The ardent faith of the preceding ages, was succeeded by doubt, and polemical controversies. After the simple sculptures of Niccola Pisano, of Donato, and Ghiberti, came these of Baccio Bandinelli. The architecture of Arnolfo, of Fra Sisto, and Fra Ristoro, was no longer visible. Miniaturing and painting on glass, languished, and disappeared; and painting—the noble, and dear companion of its glories—the reflex of all its celestial delights—having abjured its most high and holy office of comfortress and instructress of the people, seemed to prefer the rhapsodies and turpitudes of the mythology. No human power—no human counsel, could have staid the movement of an age, that tended to external perfection. It remained only for Christian art to give a more splendid sample of its beauties, by concentrating, in one man, all that it had produced, whether tender, devout, graceful, or sublime, in the Catacombs, or at Byzantium—in a man, whom the severe criticism of the fifteenth, and following century, should stamp as the most unapproachable painter of divinity. This man was Fra Giovanni del Mugello. He was destined to raise Christian art from the dust; for, although we concede, that those who succeeded him, may have excelled him in perfection

of design and colouring, nevertheless, he is surpassed by none in affection and religious sentiment. In fact, the sixteenth century—so enamoured of the Greek and Roman productions—so sorely travailed, in heart and soul, that it delighted only in lascivious pictures—was so astounded by his celestial works, and was so charmed by the virtues of Fra Giovanni, that, wishing to epitomise all his high deserts, it called him by the name of the Angelic; thus assimilating the painter of Mugello, to the Doctor of Aquino. Both were remarkable for innocence and sanctity of life; both wore the same habit, and followed the same rule. If the title was bestowed on S. Thomas, for having excelled all men, in describing the angelic and Divine Nature, it was also due to the artist, for having rendered it almost palpable by the tintings of his pencil.

CHAPTER II.

Published and unpublished Documents, from which the present Life of Fra Giovanni Angelico has been compiled.

Before we begin to describe the life and works of Fra Giovanni, we deem it our duty to state, from what sources we have collected the notices regarding him; and, to make the reader aware of the method we have adopted, to satisfy those who are desirous of knowing more of this illustrious painter, than has been hitherto set forth, and who are not satisfied if anything, calculated to throw light on his genius, goodness, and innermost nature, be omitted. The method, however, may not satisfy the tastes and desires of all parties. Some would be content with a rapid and simple narrative which would only point out the extraordinary merits of

his works, and the principal actions of his life. Others, on the contrary, who praise this artist, more for his conceptions, than developments, (his grand scope being, rather to move and instruct, than to delight,) are anxious to learn, as distinctly as possible, the causes of that profound emotion, which is ordinarily experienced in presence of his pictures; wishing, as it were, to be introduced to the secret movements of his heart, and to feel, whilst perusing his life, these tender impressions, that the sight of his works is always calculated to produce. We, therefore, according to our poor ability, will endeavour to satisfy the longings of the one, without lessening these of the other.

Before Vasari published his Lives of the Painters and Sculptors, (1550,) three Dominicans, who were almost contemporaries, had made an epitome of that of Fra Giovanni the Angelic. The first of these is Father Giovanni de Tolosani, the Chronicler of the convent of S. Dominic at Fiesole, who, according to his own statement, commenced it in 1516; that is, seventy-one years after the death of our painter. But so negligent was he in writing the Life, that, without mentioning the year of his birth or decease, he did little more than produce a confused catalogue of his paintings, suppressing every one of these particulars which Vasari detailed fully forty years afterwards. Nevertheless, deficient as this manuscript is, it will serve to throw some light on the life of this artist. The second is Father Roberto Ubaldini, the Annalist of the convent of S. Mark, of whom we have already spoken. He began to write his Annals in 1505, but did not continue them further than 1508. It is certain, however, that he did not die till 1534. We have mentioned him posteriorly to Tolosani, for, although a more copious and eloquent writer of the Annals of his

convent than the former, he makes but passing mention of the Angelico, who was affiliated to the convent of Fiesole. The third is Father Leandro Alberti of Bologna, a historian and geographer of great merit. In 1517 he published a volume of Latin eulogies on the illustrious men of the Preaching-Friars; but we collect from two letters written by friends of the author, and prefixed to the work, (the first dated February, and the second March, 1516,) that they were composed some years before. Amongst these eulogiums is that of Fra Giovanni Angelico. Alberti is not much more copious than Tolosani and Ubaldini; but he narrates some particulars that we find in the Life written by Vasari many years afterwards, and, what is really valuable, the day and the month of the painter's death, unknown to all historians of art up to this period. After the publication of Vasari's work, two other Dominicans briefly described the life, or rather made incidental mention of the Angelico, and these are, Father Serafino Razzi of Florence, and Father Bottonio of Perugia; the first in his History of the Illustrious Men of the Order, and in that of its Saints and Beatified. The second in the MS. Annals that still exist in S. Domenico of Perugia. But the first copied Vasari, and the second translated Ubaldini. Neither of the two, however, added a single line to the Life written of him by the first historian of our arts.[1] It remains for

[1] Two poets, contemporaries of Fra Angelico, make honourable mention of him in their verses. The first is Fr. Domenico da Corella, who died in 1483. In a heroic poem, "De Origine. Urbis Flor.," he speaks of him thus—

"Angelicus Pictor quam finxerat ante Johannes
Nomine, non Jotto, non Cimabue minor."—v. vol. xii. *Deliciæ Eruditorum.*

Corella here alludes to the painting of the Madonna in the church of the Servites, which has been erroneously attributed to Pietro Cavallini. Rosini, (Storia della Pittura, v. 2, c. viii.,) conjectures that

us now to ask how Vasari, who lived so long after the time of the Angelico, was enabled to enter so minutely into the details of his life, whilst the two chroniclers of Fiesole and S. Marco, and Leandro Alberti, who were so near to him, observe such profound silence? This appears to us a grave question, as Vasari is not accustomed to cite authorities in confirmation of his statements, and has no great reputation for truthfulness. Having weighed this difficulty well, we incline to think that the said biographer collected all the traditions regarding the painter in Florence and Fiesole; and that they were faithfully conveyed to him by Fra Eustachio, the miniaturist, who, as we have already observed, gave great assistance to Vasari in the first edition of his work. For, when he took the habit from Fra Girolamo Savonarola, in 1496, (forty-two years after the death of the Angelico,) the history of his life and works was so fresh in the memory of people then living, that it was very easy to gather all the particulars which have come down to us. This miniaturist, moreover, lived to be eighty-three years of age, and, being gifted with a most retentive memory, he was well able to describe a long and important period, not only of Florentine history, but of the arts also.

After the writers of his life, follow some partial documents, discovered in the past century and the antecedent, by Baldinucci and Father Guglielmo della

it was restored by Fra Giovanni. The second is Giovanni Santi da Urbino, painter, and father of Raffaello, who, in a poem entitled "Dei fatti ed imprese di Federico Duca d'Urbino," which is now in the Vatican, (unpublished,) speaks thus of the Fiesolan:—

"Ma nell' Italia in questa età presente
Vi fu il degno Gentil da Fabriano
Giovan da Fiesole frate al ben ardente."

Giovanni Santi died, August, 1494.

Valle. With these preliminary notices, we will now proceed to write the Life of the painter Fra Giovanni Angelico.

CHAPTER III.

The Origin, Country, Studies, and Religious Profession of Fra Giovanni Angelico.

THE uncertainty of the ancient memoirs, and the imprudence of those who pretended to supply them by fictions and romance, have so strangely confused the life of the Angelico, that to place it in a clear light, and separate truth from probability, and probability from falsehood, is a very arduous undertaking. Vasari states that he was of Fiesole, but it is likely that he alludes to the convent of this place, where he resided so long, instead of making it out as his birth-place. Father Guglielmo Bartoli, on the other hand, suspects that he was born in Florence or its neighbourhood.[1] Montalembert says that he saw the light in Mugello, adding that Mugello is a hamlet in the vicinity of Florence.[2] Not being able to discover the cognomen of the family, they thought it judicious to invent one. Thus Lorenzo Cantini, citing Borghini, calls him a Montorsoli, strangely confounding Fra Giovanni Angiolo Montorsoli, a Servite, an illustrious sculptor, and disciple of Buonarroti, with our painter.[3] It is true that Borghini has not fallen into these errors. Lanzi, on the authority of the "Novelle Letterarie" of the year 1773, states that in the world he was called Santi Tosini, son

[1] Istoria di S. Antonino e de' suoi piu illustri Discepoli. Florence, 1782.
[2] Du Vandalisme et du Catholicisme dans l'Art. V. Append., p. 243.
[3] Hetruria Sacra, v. 3.

of Michele Ridolfi, a painter. But Fra Santi Tosini, the Dominican, of the convent of Fiesole, and a most excellent painter, died in Rome more than a hundred and fifty years after the Angelico, (1608.)[1] Finally, Masselli suspects that he was called Petri.[2] Nor is there less difficulty in determining the year of his birth, as the first edition of Vasari would have it in 1388, and the second in 1387. Brocchi dates it about 1390-6.[3]

Having briefly set forth the various opinions of historians, we will now, with the aid of authentic documents, describe the early years of the artist. Fra Giovanni Angelico, as we said in the life of his brother, was born near Vicchio, a strong and picturesque castle, situated between Dicomano and Borgo San Lorenzo, on the river Sieve, in the vast and fertile province of Mugello. Vespignano, the birth-place of Giotto, is but a short distance from it. Thus the same region was the birth-place of the father of Italian painting, and of one of his most illustrious followers, the painter of nature and of heaven. The castle of Vicchio was built by the Florentine Repulic, in 1324, to curb the licentiousness of the Counts Guidi, after having levelled the ancient fortress of Ampinana.[4] We will date the birth of Fra Giovanni

[1] Hist. of Painting, Epoch 1st, Florent. School. There is a biography of this F. Santi Tosini, who was reputed a most holy man, in the MSS. Chronicle of S. Dom. at Fiesole. It is believed that he assisted his father in restoring the Madonna in the Annunziata, (Church of the Annunciation,) at Florence.

[2] See the Notes to Vasari's Life of the Angelico, by David Passigli, Florence, 1832. This is by far the best edition of the Lives, and abounds in annotations teeming with artistic lore.

[3] G. M. Brocchi Descriz. della Prov. del Mugello. All these errors have been copied by M. Fortoul, in a work entitled De l'Art. en Allemagne. Paris, 1843.

[4] Giovanni Villani, Cronache Fior. l. ix. c. 274.

in 1387, as we have no arguments to refute Vasari's correction of himself. His father was Pietro; his cognomen unknown.[1] In the world he was called Guido or Guidolino; and to the authority of Vasari is added that of Baldinucci, who discovered a precious document which we will give in its proper place. The epithet Blessed, or Angelic, was given him by the veneration of the people. We do not know whether he had any other brother than Fra Benedetto the miniaturist; and as to the temporal affairs of his parents we can only repeat what Vasari has recorded. "He might have remained in the world in very ample circumstances, and along with what he possessed he might have earned much by the exercise of that art in which he was well skilled, while yet a mere youth." From this we collect that he applied himself at a very early period of his life to design and the rudiments of painting; and for this reason he left Vicchio for Florence. I know not who was the instructor of his youth, but I hold as indubitable that his first occupation was illuminating Choral-books; and Vasari, Lanzi, and Rossini, agree in this opinion. For, as we have already observed, the apprenticeship of the painters of that age was spent in miniaturing the predelle of the pictures with histories in small figures; thus gradually progressing to works of large dimensions. As

[1] To show more clearly that the cognomen of the Angelico was not Pietri, we deem it sufficient to observe that, in the Chronicle of Fiesole, and also in that of S. Marco, and S. Maria Novella, and generally in these of all the Mendicant Orders, the name of the Religious is immediately followed by that of his father, grandfather, or birth-place; but we very rarely find the cognomen. To take one example out of thousands, the celebrated painter, Fra Bartolommeo della Porta is called, in the Chronicle of S. Marco, "Fra Bartholomeus Pauli Jacopi de Florentia." Here Paolo is the name of his father, Giacomo of his grandfather; but neither of them can be said to designate the cognomen of his family.

a proof of this we may instance the example of Bartolomeo della Gatta, the Camaldulese monk; who, after having studied miniature, in his mature years practised historical subjects with happiest success; till with Luca Signorelli da Cortona, and Pietro Perugino he was invited to Rome to paint the chapel of Pope Sixtus IV. But what we have said in our essay on the Dominican miniaturists is quite sufficient. Baldinucci and Rosini think that his master in the art of painting was Gherardo Starnina, a Florentine, whose style is described by Lanzi as "gay;" but irrespective of Vasari's silence, I am inclined to doubt it, as Gherardi spent many years in Spain, and having returned to Italy died in 1403, when Guidolino of Mugello was but sixteen years of age. It is true that Baldinucci was induced by a similarity of style, which he recognised in these two masters, to believe that Fra Angelico had been his pupil. Nevertheless, the opinion is worthy of consideration; for if it be well founded, it would go to prove that the Angelico was the con-disciple of Masolino da Panicale, to whom he shows some affinity in his shading and management of drapery; and as Masolino may have been his senior, it is likely that he instructed him by precept and example.[1]

Our Guido possessed a mild and amiable disposition, and such exquisite taste for the beauties of nature, that he easily ascended to these of a higher order. In the admirable accord of all visible things there is a poetry, a law of love, and a beauty teeming with sweet emotions, far more easily felt than expressed, since to feel it, and describe it, is the privilege of but very few. Painting,

[1] We adopt the correction made by Baldinucci in the Chronology of Masolino da Panicale; since, were we to follow Vasari, Masolino, disciple of Starnina, should have been born the very year in which the master died.

that most powerful and animated language, when associated to the ecstacy of a contemplative mind, does not require great efforts, or to astound or flatter the senses by the strength of tints, or the management of lights and shadows; but in the sweetness and variety of lines, in the profiling of the countenances, and in the simple and ingenious movement of the figure, it becomes in some sort a reflex of that arcane beauty, and of that harmony which, pervading all creation, reveals itself supremely in man. Paintings of this character are not for the effeminate or the parasite, but for men of delicate and noble sensibility. Guido saw many artists of that age so enamoured of nature, that they aspired to no greater praise than that of pourtraying its exterior. All their glory was to approach it as nearly as possible; in a word, to deceive the senses as much as they could. This appeared to him to be not only foolish but criminal, as it substituted the means for the end, and made art a pastime and a pleasure for the frivolous. He held that it might be made as useful to that age as either philosophy or eloquence, provided it became the medium for inculcating great lessons, religious and moral. And truly did that age need them, and Florence beyond all the cities of Italy; for the factions were stained with each other's blood; morality was disregarded, and religion was made instrumental to the ambition of many, who, during the terrible schism, abused it for their sordid and sacrilegious purposes.

Indeed, when I reflect on the condition of sciences and letters, and more particularly still on the civil and political state of Italy during the fifteenth century; I am persuaded that a grand mission was confided to the artists who, if they followed the examples of the Angelico, and the counsels of Savonarola, must have wonderfully

improved the morals of the people. Our Guido, therefore, to satisfy the yearnings of his heart, and to obey the command of heaven, determined to embrace the cloister-life, concluding that he might thus strengthen his heart and soul with the sublime sweetness of religion. He was then about twenty-one, or twenty-two years of age, and his artistic education, if not perfected, must have been considerably advanced.

On the declivity of the lovely hill of Fiesole, there had been already laid the foundations of a convent for the Preaching-Friars.[1] It was rumoured far and near that this was to be an asylum of sanctity—a retreat for the penitent and prayerful. The Blessed Giovanni di Domenico Bacchini, better known as Dominici, (his cognomen,) a religious of the convent of S. Maria Novella, was its founder. He wished to present a model of reform to all the religious Orders which had fallen away from their ancient observance, by reason of the terrible pestilence of the preceding century, and the schism which was then actually afflicting the church. S. Antonino was amongst the first of those who presented themselves to Dominici in order to embrace that reform (1405); and two years afterwards he was followed by the two brothers of Mugello; who came, as it were, to adorn the restoration of the Dominican Order with sweetest flowers. The building was commenced on the 1st of March, of the year 1406; and in the September following, fourteen religious, most of whom had come from Cortona, where there was another convent reformed by Dominici, were domiciled within its precincts. Father Marco di Venezia having been appointed its superior; the Blessed Giovanni

[1] Jacopo Altoviti, (a Dominican,) Bishop of Fiesole, gave the ground for the building in 1405, but the formal cession of it was not perfected till 1406.

Dominici was obliged to leave Fiesole, as he had been sent as orator by the Florentine Republic to Pope Gregory XII.; who, wishing to retain him in his court, raised him to the high dignity of Cardinal.[1] In 1407 Guidolino and his brother presented themselves to Father Marco, and asked and obtained the habit of S. Dominic. I think, however, that they were sent to Cortona, as was also S. Antonino, there being no novitiate attached to the convent of Fiesole, which was still very limited and quite unfinished. The master of novices of the two painters was the venerable Father Lorenzo di Ripafratta, a most holy religious, the very same who presided over the first years of S. Antonino's cloister-life, and of whom the holy Archbishop has left us a splendid eulogium in a letter addressed to the Dominicans of Pistoja, to condole with them on the loss of that mirror of every virtue.[2] The Fiesolan Chronicle leaves no doubt that the two brothers were enrolled amongst the clerics. Guido took the name of Fra Giovanni, and the younger brother that of Fra Benedetto.[3] In 1408 they made their solemn profession; and it is very likely that they immediately returned to the convent of S. Domenico, at Fiesole. Here they were united in holy friendship with the glorious S. Antonino, who reciprocated their affection and held the twain in equal esteem.[4]

A year had scarcely passed over our two painters in

[1] This letter is dated October, 1456. V. Vita di S. Antonino, by Dom Maccarani. Venezia, 1709.

[2] Cron. Conv. S. Dom. de Fesulis, "1407. F. Joannes Petri de Mugello Juxta Vicchium, optimus pictor, qui multas tabulas et parietes in diversis locis pinxit, accepit habitum clericorum in hoc conventu . . . et seq. anno fecit professionem."

[3] Along with the friendship of S. Antonino, Fra Giovanni enjoyed also that of the Blessed Pietro Capucci, and the Blessed Costanzo da Fabriano, who about that period were living in the convent of S. Domenico in Cortona.

the convent of Fiesole, when the tempest of religious and political discord which had so terribly travailed the church and society, burst forth in all its fury, and disturbed the peace of their solitude. Up to this period the Florentine Republic remained faithful to Gregory XII., to whom, as we have already stated, it sent the Blessed Giovanni Dominici as its orator in 1406. Nevertheless, on the 26th of January, 1409, having renounced all allegiance to the said Pontiff, the Republic, by a solemn and formal act, declared that it would adhere to the approaching council of Pistoja, and acknowledge whatever Pontiff it might elect and recognise. That Synod began its sittings on the 25th of March of said year, and on the 5th of June it deposed the two competitors, Benedict XIII., and Gregory XII. On the 26th of the same month it elected Fra Pietro Fillorga, a Minorite, with the title of Alexander V. This determination instead of extinguishing the schism, rendered it still more calamitous, as it added a third to the two Pontiffs already mentioned; who fulminating excommunications against each other, and enlisting clerics, prelates, and princes for their respective partisans, carried the torch of discord into the abodes where peace and love should have their sanctuary and citadel. The Florentine Republic and the General of the Preaching-Friars, (Tommaso di Fermo,) had sworn obedience to Alexander V.; but the religious of the convent of S. Domenico at Fiesole, owing to the persuasions of Dominici, who adhered to Gregory XII., remained unshaken in their devotion to the latter. The superior of the Order sought by threats and entreaties to weaken their constancy; but when he found that he could not effect his purpose, he caused Father Antonio di Milano, prior of the convent of Fiesole, to be cast into the prison of Florence. The

religious, indignant at this sacrilegious violence, unanimously resolved to abandon that loved sojourn, rather than belie their consciences; and to seek elsewhere that liberty and peace which they could not enjoy on their natal soil. But as Cortona, which was then (1409) beseiged by Ladislao, King of Naples, could not afford them a secure refuge, they left the convent of S. Domenico at midnight, and set out for Foligno, which city was leal to Pope Gregory XII. Led by Father Antonio di Milano, the whole community, which consisted of about twenty, arrived safely at their destination in Umbria.[1] Here they were united to the brotherhood of the convent of S. Domenico, who received them with that distinction that was due to their deserts.[2] It must be admitted, however, that they got but a very cold reception from Monsignore Federico Frezzi, bishop of the city, a religious of the same institute, and a celebrated rhymer of his times.[3] This fact, hitherto unrecorded by the historians who have written of S. Antonino and the Angelico, throws additional light on the life and works of the painter, and induces us to make a few important reflections.

Amongst modern writers on art, there are some so enamoured of the sublime beauties of the pictorial school of Umbria, that their admiration seems occasionally to

[1] V. Document at the end of this volume.

[2] Supposing that the Angelico and his brother were already in Cortona, when the religious of Fiesole abandoned their convent, they must have remained there from 1407 to 1418—*i. e.*, about eleven consecutive years.

[3] He is the author of a poem, (in terza rima,) which he entitled, "Quatriregnio, or the Kingdom of Love, Lucifer, Vice, and Virtue." It was published in Venice, 1515. According to Tiraboschi, it is "in imitation of Dante, to whom he is very far from being equal, though we must admit that he has imitated him." Frezzi died at the Council of Constance in 1416.

go beyond the confines of truth: for they have imagined that these mountains have sent forth a chosen band of painters, who re-awakened the semi-spent poetry of art throughout all Italy; and a writer of our own times, for whom we profess great veneration, has not hesitated to assert, that "The poetry of art was everywhere dead; everywhere, save in the fastnesses of the Apennines. Amidst the gloomy forests and rugged mountains where the Seraphic (S. Francis of Assisi,) raised his prayer to the Eternal, beseeching Him to send His peace into the hearts of his brethren; amidst the mountains of Umbria there was reared a simple, modest, and solitary school of Painting, which gloried in sublime inspirations, and cultivated external beauty only to show the splendour of its conceptions. Gentile da Fabriano, the Blessed Angelico, Lorenzo di Credi, Perugino, Pinturricchio, and, finally, Raffaello, were the pupils of this school."[1] Now as the Angelico's brief sojourn in Foligno might lead the advocates of this opinion to form false or exaggerated conclusions, we will not omit observing that, if Umbria, in the fifteenth century, had educated a pictorial school of any merit, with the aid of the miniaturists, nevertheless, it was not of such a character as to be able to compete, either in the abundance or ability of its artists, with the schools of Florence, Siena, or Bologna. Moreover, if by poetry of art we are to understand devout affection, and beauty of images, I do not know what painter of Umbria could, in these characteristics, I will not say excel, but rival, the ancient Tuscan artists, Giotto, Memmi, Gaddi, Spinello, Pietro Cavallini, etc. So true is this, that, when we seek the names of the champions

1 Sull' Educazione del Pittore Storico Ordierno Italiano, di P. Selvatico. Padova, 1842.

of this school who were educated on the Apennines. instead of Nuzi, Giovanni Bonnini di Assisi, Lello Perugino, Francesco Tio, Fabriano, and other obscure painters, mentioned by Lanzi, they cite the Blessed Angelico, Benozzo Gozzoli, Lorenzo di Credi, who were Florentines, and who, in their own country, were tutored by the wonderful works of Giotto, who preceded them; nay, more, this same Gentile da Fabriano studied art to far greater perfection in his own country, under the Angelico, than elsewhere. Again, I deem it very remarkable (if this Apennine school was so very illustrious) that, when they were decorating the church of S. Francis in Assisi, instead of Umbrian painters, we find the builders inviting, (after the Greeks,) Cimabue, Giotto, Memmi, Gaddi, who all belonged to the Tuscan school. But if, as it is likely, these words: "The poetry of art was everywhere dead," be referable to the times when the *naturalism* of Massaccio and Lippi began to influence art in Florence; I still maintain that, as long as the Angelico, Benozzo, Lorenzo di Credi, and others, remained in that capital, it cannot be said to have died there or elsewhere, since, in them, and by them, it may be said to have been revivified. None can surpass us in our veneration for the illustrious propagators of Christian art, whose glorious works entitle them to the respect of every man who values either religion or its adornments, and we here proclaim our acknowledgments of their genius; but we deem it a duty not less important to point out how dangerous it is, in a matter of history, to go beyond these confines that are marked by the severity of criticism.

[1] M. A. Rio is far more cautious, and confines himself to the mystic school. V. Poesie Chretienne, pp. 168, 169. He does not, however, deny that the Florentine and Siena schools sent to the mountains of Umbria little colonies, or better still, the choicest flowers of the two schools. V. p. 209.

CHAPTER IV.

The first Works of the Angelico in Foligno and Cortona.

The Fiesolan exiles, having found a refuge in Cortona, where Frezzi, bishop of the city, had given them the convent of S. Domenico, set about introducing that severe discipline, and all these conventual observances which were cultivated by the Blessed Giovanni Dominici, in that of Fiesole. S. Antonino was sent to govern the convents of the Roman province and of the kingdom of Naples. Fra Angelico, to satisfy the yearnings of his heart, which required that he should show by his works the holy fire of affection that burned within his bosom, once more resumed his pencil. And, indeed, Montalembert and Rio have truly written of him, that painting was his ordinary prayer and his mode of elevating his heart and soul to God. It is said that Dante, in the Paradiso, mated the doctrine of Thomas of Aquino to the harmony of his verse; and I would venture to affirm that the Angelico incarnated and coloured the conceptions of these two great men. If we compare the pictures of the Angelico with the writings of the great philosopher and the great poet, we will have little difficulty in detecting the identity of thought that characterised the three Italians in their theories of the supernatural, and the imagery with which they clothed them. The primitive mystic school of Bologna had such a limited range of subjects for its artistic productions, that Simone confined himself to painting Crucifixions, and Vitale very rarely went beyond the usual subject of Madonnas. The Angelico, educated in the poetic and

imaginative school of Giotto, Spinello, and Memmi, embraced the whole history of the Old Testament, and, from time to time, produced something in the Legendary character, in which he surpassed all his predecessors. Having devoted his life and genius to Religion, he firmly resolved to observe the rigid canons of Christian art, and all the traditions of the Giotto school, of which, I would venture to say, he was the last flower. Hence, he never profaned his pencil with merely secular subjects; for he resolved to make it, like the Evangelical word, a means of moral and religious perfection.

We have no works which can be attributed to him with certainty at this period; but it is only reasonable to suppose that, during his sojourn in Foligno, he began to paint the altar-piece of the chapel of S. Niccolò dei Guidalotti, for the church of S. Domenico in Perugia, which still exists. This I reckon amongst the earliest of his works, for it exhibits more of the style and mannerism of the Giottesque than is to be found in any of his other performances. M. Rio is of opinion that he executed it when he was returning from Rome to Florence, through Perugia.[1] But we do not know, if we except the three months he passed at Orvieto in 1447, that he ever left Rome after having been summoned to work there by Eugene IV. Neither are there good grounds for the opinion of Father Timoteo Bottonio, who writes that he produced it in 1437;[2] at which period Fra Angelico was in Florence, when the restorations of the church of S. Marco and the building of the new convent, which he adorned with his marvellous frescos, had been commenced. This picture, now in the

[1] Poesie Chretienne, c. vi., p. 199.
[2] MSS. Annali.

chapel of S. Orsola, like other works of the same artist, must have been of pyramidal form, and was divided into three compartments, after the style of the triptychs, with one or three cusps, (like arrow-heads,) on the summit, and a gradino, (base,) in the under part; the whole was enclosed within a richly-wrought cornice, in the interstices of which were painted many beautiful little figures of saints, in the style of the celebrated Deposition from the Cross, by the same author, in the gallery of the Florentine Academy of Design. Judging from the portions of it which we have, it was composed after this fashion:—On a gold ground he painted the Blessed Virgin, seated on a throne, with the Divine Babe on her knees. Two angels stand at either side, with baskets of flowers, from which the infant seems to have taken a rose that he holds in his right hand. At foot of the throne are some shrubs, with white and red roses; a beautiful idea, that the painter repeated afterwards in Cortona and elsewhere. The Virgin, rejoicing in her maternity, smiles on her Son; and this portrait appears to us to be the noblest and sweetest of the many he has executed. Its grand characteristics, like these of all his other paintings of the Madonna, are purity and grace, so well befitting the Mother of the Son of God. I think, however, that the design of the nude in the infant, as well as angels, is feeble. Retouchings, or, perhaps, the injuries of time, prevent us from recognising the drapery of the Virgin's robe. In the two lateral compartments, now divided, there were four figures, two on the right, and two on the left; these were S. John Baptist, S. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr, S. Dominic and S. Nicholas, all in one line, according to the Giottesque; and, if we except the second of these figures, all the others are most beautiful and excellently executed. But truly beautiful was the

gradino of this picture, on which he painted three histories of the life of S. Nicholas, of which only one remains, the other two having been removed to the Vatican.[1] This, that may still be seen in the church of S. Domenico, (Perugia,) over the great door of the sacristy, is divided into two compartments; in one of which he represents the holy bishop, and two youths, who, with bandaged eyes, are in the act of waiting the headsman's stroke; multitudes, assembled to witness the execution, seem to shudder and groan; and the sudden appearance of the Saint stays the axe of the executioner, and saves them. In the other he painted the funeral of the Saint, whom he represents stretched on the bier, and surrounded by the poor, by monks and women, who exhibit signs of the deepest grief. But that which is still more exquisite is the action of the two youthful acolytes, one of whom raises the hem of his surplice to wipe away the tears which he could not restrain. In the upper part of the same compartment he painted the soul of the Saint conducted to heaven by angels. Amongst the works of the Angelico, executed in the miniature style, this appears to me to be truly beautiful, the little figures being exquisitely designed and coloured. The cornice that adorned this picture, (now divided into twelve pieces, each having a little figure,) may be seen near the same door of the sacristy; but, although they possess great merit, no one that has seen his Deposition from the Cross in Florence, will pronounce them to be his best performance. To complete the entire picture, we want the points of the upper part; and, probably, the two little pictures in the same sacristy formed a part of them. These represent

[1] "In the first chamber of the Vatican Gallery, are two paintings with three histories of the Saint; *i. e.*, his birth, preaching, and miracles." *Nibby Itinerario di Roma*, 1830

the Annunciation and the angel Gabriel, on a gold ground.[1] They appear to me to have been executed by the same painter, but I would not dare to affirm it. To confute the error of Mariotti, who attributes the figures we have been describing to Gentile da Fabriano, I think it quite sufficient to remark that the same are over and over again repeated in the paintings of Fra Giovanni Angelico; a peculiarity of this painter being, never to vary the types of his images, which, though a hundred times repeated, are always the same. The long experience which we have of this artist will not permit us to doubt it for a moment. To this we may add, also, the grave authority of F. Timoteo Bottonio, the Chronicler of the convent of Perugia, by whom we are assured that the same painter not only painted the picture in the Guidalotti chapel, but also that of the great altar of the ancient church of S. Domenico, which was still existing in the time of the Annalist, *i. e.* in 1570. Rosini[2] agrees in Bottonio's opinion.

We do not know that the Angelico executed any work for his convent of Foligno or for the other convents of his Order in Umbria; and we are equally ignorant of the length of his absence from Tuscany. But, although the Chronicle of Fiesole states that it was of many years' duration, I do not think that it exceeded four. At the termination of this period, the pestilence showed itself in Foligno; and the death of the prior and of many of the

[1] There are in the same place two panels with the same subject, but by a different artist, both representing the Annunciation. The oldest, by an unknown hand, represents the Holy Ghost in the form a dove, with the divine fetus in its beak. This error appears in Pistoja, in a very ancient painting on glass.

[2] Storia della Pittura, v. 3. This picture was taken by the French, and restored at the general peace.

religious relaxed that severe discipline which they had established. This, indeed, was the usual result of this terrible scourge. Meanwhile, Alexander V. died at Bologna, and three years afterwards, (1413,) in Genoa, Father T. di Fermo, Master general of the Order, who, from the opposition he met from many of his religious in various parts of Italy, had bitter experience of the evils that must result from doing violence to consciences. When every apprehension of danger disappeared, and when it had become irksome or perilous to remain in Foligno, all the religious began to yearn for the sunny hill of Fiesole. But, on account of non-residence, this convent had fallen into the hands of the bishop. Wherefore they set out immediately for Cortona, and implored Cardinal Domenici to have their ancient domicile restored to them. This must have happened about 1414.[1]

We think that it was about this time that Fra Giovanni produced the paintings which are in Cortona, as we cannot reasonably believe he could have executed them during the period of his noviceship.

On the exterior façade of the church of S. Domenico, on the little arch over the entrance, he frescoed the Blessed Virgin with her Son in her arms; and on either side S. Domenico and S. Peter, martyr, in the act of adoration. On the ceiling he painted the four Evangelists. This work, despite the injuries of rain and sun, through the course of four hundred years, retains much freshness of colouring and a certain suavity of

[1] "It was stipulated that three Friars should always reside in the convent, and that if they left it either on account of pestilence or violence done to them, and did not return within two months, they forfeited all right to said convent." —*Chron. S. Dom. de Fesulis.*

pencil that reveals the Angelico; but the Evangelists, having been less exposed, are better preserved. For the same church he executed two pictures, only one of which remains; the other, with its gradino, having been removed to the oratory Del Gesu, near the cathedral. That which is still in S. Domenico, in the lateral chapel, near the grand altar, may, in some sort, be said to have been a repetition of the other in S. Domenico of Perugia, which we have described; but it is so far superior to it in design and colouring, that I do not hesitate to number it amongst the best of the Angelico's works. He painted, moreover, a Madonna, of large dimensions, seated on a throne, as he was always accustomed to represent her, having on her knees the Child, Jesus, in whose right hand he placed a rose; angels, with baskets of flowers and vases, are at the foot of the throne. On the right of our Lady, on the same line, are S. John Baptist, and S. John the Evangelist; on the left S. Mary Magdalene and S. Mark. As the form of this picture is, in its upper extremity, pointed, its vertex exhibits a crucifixion, and on either side the B. V. and S. John; and in the two angles of the triangle, are two circlets, in one of which is the Angel Gabriel, and in the other an Annunciation. Here we find, with very little variation, the same idea that we have recognised in the picture at Perugia. He very often repeated this same subject on panel and in fresco in Florence and elsewhere, with the addition of other figures; but he has rarely excelled the perfection of these figures in drapery, shading, grace or beauty. To this picture, probably, belonged that gradino with the histories of the life of S. Dominic, which is now in the church Del Gesù. If the reader has visited Bologna, and seen the sculptures that adorn the sepulchre of the holy Founder of the

Preachers, he must have observed how the same inspiration and the same conceptions guided the chisels of Nicola Pisano, Fra Guglielmo, Alfonso Lombardi, and the pencil of Fra Angelico, all of whom vied with each other in grace, poetry, and truth. In six compartments he painted eight histories of the life of the Saint; and, from time to time, by way of episodes to that epic, he introduced some graceful little figures of saints, which, far from violating the unity of the subject, tend to heighten the beauty and perfection of the entire composition. First, there is S. Peter, Martyr, the wound in whose head and breast tells how generously he laid down his life for the faith; then comes the compartment in which he executed two histories—the first is the vision of Pope Honorius III., who, after having refused to sanction the new Order, dreamt that he saw the Lateran Basilica falling, and S. Dominic sustaining it; the second is, S. Dominic meeting S. Francis of Assisi, who, recognising each other by divine revelation, kneel and embrace. The second compartment, like the first, is divided into two parts, one of which represents the poor cell, and the other the oratory of the saint. The perspective in both is admirable. In the oratory we see S. Dominic before the altar in ecstacy receiving the gospels and staff from Saints Peter and Paul, who send him forth to evangelize peoples and nations. One of the most charming figures in this composition is that of a friar, who, setting out on his mission in obedience to the command of his superior, pauses on the threshold of the cell to steal a glance at this wonderful apparition. Next comes a beautiful little figure of S. Michael the Archangel, light, airy, and full of grace. In the third compartment there are also two histories; in the first, he represents S. Dominic disputing with the Albigeois; and

in the second the ordeal of fire, in which he depicts the astonishment of the Saint's adversaries on seeing their book burn and his unscathed. In the picture of the saint resuscitating the young Napoleone at Rome, he faithfully carried out the idea of Niccola Pisano, and placed the afflicted mother near the dead body, imploring the Saint to call back her son to life. Then follows the figure of a martyr, beautifully painted. I am ignorant, however, of the subject. By the dalmatic we know that he is a holy deacon, and that the heavy weight suspended from his neck describes the mode of his death. He produced only one history in the compartment that follows; and here he represents the Holy Founder seated at table with his brethren, and the angels bringing them food. In the last he painted the death of the holy patriarch; and this, in my judgment, excels all the others. The holy soul has been already borne into the bosom of the Eternal by angels; His bereaved children surround the lifeless body; some of them kiss his hands, others raise their arms to heaven; some of them, almost petrified by grief, fix their eyes on his beloved features; whilst others, unable to restrain their tears, raise their garments to their eyes. This is a work calculated to awaken piety in every heart. The actual gradino has a most graceful figure of S. Thomas of Aquino. All these histories are beatifully designed and coloured, and are most simple in their composition.

The picture, by the same artist, that passed from the church of his Order to that of the Gesù, is an Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin; a subject much loved by Fra Fra Giovanni. In painting the Saints, as we have already observed, he always maintained the same types; whereas, in these of the Madonna and angels, he is always varied and graceful. And although he some-

times leaves us to desire more correct design and greater boldness of outline, (a peculiarity of the great masters,) nevertheless, none can excel him in that angelic purity and supreme virtue that radiates from the countenances of his virgins and angels.[1] This, that we now speak of, is not, certainly, the most perfect, but it is not less devout than the others. We will not undertake to describe it, as it is a repetition of a similar one which he frescoed in the convent of S. Marco. Of this, the design of which is more perfect, we will have occasion to speak elsewhere. Here we find that he adhered to the Giottesque traditions, as he introduces the usual salutation, "Ave Maria gratia plena;" as though he wished, by this means, to invite the faithful to a more profound contemplation of the ineffable mystery. That this was the object of the painter, there cannot be a doubt, since, in his times, the use of such inscriptions had been universally discontinued, and an artist of his great power did not need them to express or signify his ideas.[2] In the wings of this angel there is a profusion of gold and colouring unexampled in the other pictures of the same; nor does the drapery of this figure deserve so much praise as that which we find in the generality of Fra Giovanni's works. Here, indeed, it is too much elaborated and confused. And since the Incarnation of the Word is intimately connected with the history of our first parents, he introduced into this picture a landscape

[1] I will here observe that Fra Angelico followed two different manners in his paintings of our Lady. Those that represent her *glorified* are by far the most beautiful. In these he always represents her clothed in white. In these which represent her living on earth, he clothes her in red and azure colours.

[2] There are very few pictures, whether on panel or in fresco, by Fra Giovanni, that have not some devout inscription at foot of the painting, or in the aureole of the saints, and sometimes in their garments.

of good perspective, in which he represented Adam and Eve expelled from paradise; thus to show that Mary was made instrumental in repairing their tremendous ruin. This picture, and its two gradini, are in excellent preservation. If we be allowed to conjecture that these works were produced at different periods, I would say that the Annunciation now in the Gesù was anterior to that which is in S. Domenico. The former is feeble in design; whilst the latter may be classed amongst the best of his works.

It remains for us to speak of the gradino on which he described the Life of the Virgin, from her birth till her death, in the same manner and proportions as he did that of S. Dominic. Whosoever has seen these little and most graceful pictures by Fra Angelico, which are now in the gallery of the Uffizj at Florence, may form an idea of the histories on this gradino, some of which are repetitions of the former. The first compartment exhibits the Birth of the Virgin: and it is manifest that it must have been inserted at a late period; or, perhaps, it was taken away and restored to its proper place, since it seems to have been divided from the panel. In the second he painted the Espousals of the Virgin. In the third the Visitation, which is truly charming. The painter represents the consort of Zachary coming to meet the Virgin of Nazareth outside her habitation, on the threshold of which is a girl, who, unobserved, contemplates the joyful greeting of the two mothers. At a little distance is another woman, who, on bended knees and with hands raised to heaven, gives thanks to God for the wonders he has wrought in both. Most beautiful are the two figures of Our Lady and S. Elizabeth. But what renders this compartment really precious is a beautiful landscape, so well designed and coloured, that the Ange-

lico has no where excelled it. The fourth is an Adoration of the Magi, in every way like that in the Uffizj. The fifth is the Presentation in the Temple, with good architectural perspective. The sixth is the Death and Sepulture of the Virgin; and this, also, is a repetition of the most delightful work, which may be seen in the same gallery. The seventh is a history, which, in all probability, was taken from the gradino of the life of S. Dominic; as it represents the Blessed Virgin, surrounded by a choir of Angels, and directing the Blessed Reginald of Orleans, a Dominican, to take the habit of the new Order. This gradino is remarkable for the same excellences that are to be found in that already mentioned. Nothing can surpass the beauty of the images, the grace of the figures, or their diligent execution; and as to the colouring, which is in *tempera*, nothing can be more transparent or lively.

CHAPTER V.

Fra Giovanni returns to Fiesole.

Whilst Fra Giovanni was painting the life of our Lady in Cortona, and that of the Holy Founder of his Order, the Blessed Giovanni Dominici interested himself with the Bishop of Fiesole, and Pope Gregory XII., to have the convent which he founded restored to our friars. Father Leonardi Dati, Master-General of the Dominicans, was not less zealous in advocating their petition; till finally, after many negociations, the Fiesolan bishop yielded to their requests—on condition that the religious would present him with a vestment for the altar, worth a hundred ducats. This was in the year 1418. This sum

was taken from a bequest left to the convent by the father of S. Antonino, who died precisely at this period. It happened, moreover, that in that very year a rich Florentine merchant died and bequeathed to the convent of S. Domenico at Fiesole, six thousand florins, which he desired to be expended on enlarging the dimensions of said convent. As soon as the absolute surrender of the building had been formally made by the bishop, the Father-General sent thither four religious of the convent of Cortona, amongst whom, however, we do not find Fra Giovanni or Fra Benedetto. But there is reason for believing that all those who abandoned it in 1409 soon afterwards followed the four. As soon as the building was commenced, Fra Giovanni resumed his usual occupation of painting; for wheresoever he went he strewed flowers of art—flowers which he seems to have culled in Paradise. He strewed flowers on the mountains of Umbria and Tuscany; on the banks of Arno and Tiber; but the most beauteous and odoriferous that ever fell from his hands were treasured for the loved and sunny hill of Fiesole. And it was only just that the spot whereon he sacrificed himself to his God, should be adorned with the choicest fruits of his genius and piety. Even though history had not narrated his virtues, the very sight of these pictures would be quite sufficient to record his humility—his glowing charity, his contempt of all earthly pleasures—nay more, the tears and sighs of a soul enamoured of heaven.

In giving the reader an account of the innumerable works produced by Fra Giovanni we must observe, that as he never inscribed them with dates; and as no order of time has been recorded by Vasari, we, following the system already adopted, will classify them according to reason and history. For although there is no great

difficulty in discriminating the works executed by other painters in youth and maturity—their diversity of manners and methods always enabling us to arrive at a sure conclusion; these of Fra Giovanni, on the other hand, being characterised by a uniformity of design, shading, colouring, and composition, leave us in great embarrassment to discover which was first, and which last. Let us not forget, however, that a few of his works are executed with greater study and diligence than others.

In Fiesole, I believe, he painted many of these little panels that are now in the Academy of Design at Florence, and perhaps the doors of the armoury for the silver utensils in the sacristy of the church of the Annunciation in the same city. In his first edition Vasari numbered them amongst his earliest works; and this appears likely, as his first essays were in miniaturing and colouring histories, as has been already said. Vasari praises his diligence, but he should likewise have praised the composition, which in many compartments is most beautiful. We will not expend many words on these rare paintings, that we may avoid prolixity. He undertook to narrate the life of our Redeemer in thirty-five histories, adding a specimen of symbolic painting, and closing the series with a General Judgment, inferior in dimensions, as well as merit, to his later works; but yet not without very great excellence. Especially worthy of notice are the following:—The Adoration of the Magi —The Flight into Egypt—The Slaughter of the Innocents—The Resurrection of Lazarus—Judas Selling Christ to the Priests—The Prayer in the Garden, etc., all of which deserve much praise for their truth and happy execution. One of the doors (of the armory) seems to be far inferior to the others, and according to the opinion of some, it should be attributed to another

artist. It is that which represents the following histories:—The Nuptials in Cana—The Baptism of Christ, and the Transfiguration; but as to the merit of this work of the Angelico, it will be better to hear the opinion that Father Tanzini, (a man deeply skilled in art,) has pronounced on it.

"But amongst his marvellous and innumerable pictures, these that he executed for the armory in the chapel of the Annunziata, built by Pietro di Cosimo dei Medici, and now in the Florentine Academy of the Fine Arts, are perhaps the most admirable. They represent the life of our Lord, a favourite theme of our most pious artist, which he often meditated. Hence, it is easy to understand that he set his whole soul on it; and this work alone by that sovereign genius, would suffice to prove that in religious expression he stands superior to every other—that his soul was enlightened by a supernal ray—that his exquisite pencil was guided by faith. The drapings, simple and majestic; the movements natural, but full of dignity; the expression of the heads truly celestial, render these ideal histories superior to praise; and they must be seen over and over again in order to form a correct estimate of them. At first sight indeed, like every other solemn and extraordinary painting, they do not produce the effect that is usually the result of more brilliant works; but which, on closer study, are found to be indifferent. The more one contemplates these of the Angelico, the more palpably does he behold their arcane and ineffable excellences. The ignorant, the learned, the sciolist who knows not the secrets of art, cannot stand before these pictures without experiencing unwonted emotions—although he is utterly unable to account for the fascination which they cause. Every one must admire them, and experience in presence of them

affections not material but spiritual—nay, there is no one who would not desire that his last gaze should rest on these chaste images of Mary, the Saints, and the Crucifix."[1]

For the church of S. Domenico in Fiesole, he painted three pictures, and in the convent he frescoed two histories; and as of the former only one remains, one of them being now in Paris, and the other lost, we will describe it in the words of Vasari. "He also painted the altar-piece for the church of S. Domenico in Fiesole, and this work, because it had been injured, was retouched, and thus more injured by other masters; but the predella and the ciborium for the sacrament are in better preservation, and the little figures, surrounded by celestial glory, which we see there, are so delightful, that they seem to be of paradise, nor can one ever tire of beholding them."

The historian, however, does not tell us what was the subject of this picture; but it seems to have been the same as that which alone, of the three by the Angelico's hand, remained in that church, and is now actually in the choir. It represents the Blessed Virgin seated on a throne with her Divine Son. Here, as in his other pictures, there are two saints on the right, and two on the left, videlicit: S. Peter the Apostle, and S. Thomas of Aquino, S. Dominic, and S. Peter, Martyr. Some angels, in profound adoration, form a circle around them. The composition, simple and graceful, maintains the forms and manner of the Giottesque. Neither Vasari nor the Chronicler of the convent informs us what the predella represented; but the latter tells us that in 1501,

[1] Some of these histories were beautifully engraved by A. Perfetti in his Illustraz. dell Acad. del disegno. (1843-4.) The entire (35 in number) have been engraved and published by Nocchi.

when the tribune was repaired, the grand altar being removed to another site, this picture was restored by Lorenzo di Credi; and, as its form was pyramidal, they most unwisely reduced it to a square, and added the ornaments and little figures that surround it. After so many vicissitudes it would be difficult to form a notion of its merits.[1] I know not what became of the ancient gradino; some say that it is in the possession of Signor Valentini in Rome. The ciborium was lost with the predella.

The second picture was an Annunciation, of which Vasari speaks thus:—"In a chapel of the same church is a painting of our Lady and the Angel Gabriel, the profile of whose countenance is so devout, so delicate, and so well executed, that it does not seem to be the work of man, but of paradise; and in the landscape, forming the back-ground, he represented Adam and Eve, whose crime rendered it necessary that the Redeemer should take flesh of a Virgin. On the predella there are also some most beautiful little histories." As we have not seen this painting we cannot say more of it. We will barely observe that it was sold (in 1611) to Mario Farnese, for 1,500 ducats; and that a copy of it was left in the church of S. Domenico. The latter shared the fate of the original, and both are now lost.[2] "But above all the works executed by Fra Giovanni," continues Vasari, "and in which he surpassed himself, is the painting which is in the same church near the door, as you enter by the left. In this he represents Jesus Christ crowning our Lady in the midst of a choir of angels, and an infinite multitude of saints male and female. So numerous are they, so well delineated, so varied their attitudes, and the characters of their countenances, that

[1] Cron. S. Dom. de Fesulis. [2] Vide Document No. v.

one must feel incredible pleasure and sweetness whilst beholding them. Nay, more, it seems as though these blessed spirits could not be otherwise in heaven; or, better still, that they could not, even though they had bodies, be more exquisitely pourtrayed. For all the saints, male and female, represented here, are not only living and characterised by a sweet and delicate expression, but the entire colouring of this work seems to have been executed by the hand of a saint, or an angel like themselves: and it was for this reason that our good religious was always called Fra Giovanni Angelico. The histories of our Lady and S. Dominic on the predella are so divine in their way, that I can affirm that I never see this work without discovering some new beauty in it, and never tire of contemplating it."[1] Which words, written in an age that recognised and appreciated no beauty save the nude, and the imitation of Greek and Roman statues, in my opinion, deserve much consideration. Let those to whom the terms "mystic school and mystic painting," (of which Fra Giovanni was the prince,) appear to be dangerous innovations, and who dub the inventors of such designations hypocrites and fanatics, tell us why it was that the followers of Vasari, of Giulio Romano, and Caracci never arrived at such perfection in sacred painting. If they admit that before giving expression to noble and grand affection, it must needs be felt; how will they deny that the heart and soul of Fra Giovanni teemed with heavenly contemplations at the period when he produced these wonderful works, that have awakened such profound admiration even in Vasari? But if the term mystic painting (whose synonyme is *devout)*

[1] This painting is now in the Louvre. It was taken by the French in 1812. It is engraved by Schegel.

seems intolerable to them, provided they admit the fact, we will not reject it on such slight grounds, or quarrel with them.[1]

The two great frescos that Fra Giovanni painted in the convent must now be spoken of. That with which he decorated the refectory may be said to have been almost lost; but that in the chapter-room is admirably preserved. These two histories were executed by the Angelico at a later period, when he had attained to wonderful perfection. The one in the chapter-room is remarkable for the grandeur of its style, the softness and harmony of its tints, and bold pencilling. But to begin with the first. On the front wall of the refectory he painted a Crucifixion, (life size,) with the Blessed Virgin on one side, and S. John the Evangelist on the other: at the foot of the Cross, kneeling, and seen from behind, is S. Dominic; but this last figure seems to have been introduced at a subsequent period. We cannot now appreciate the colouring or design of this painting, as the hand of some very ignorant person, who undertook to restore it, and the vandalism of the parties who got possession of it, have all but cancelled it. The continuator of the Chronicle of the convent of S. Domenico at Fiesole, tells how it was restored by a young Florentine artist, named Francesco Mariani, in 1556; but, heavens, after what a fashion! enlarging the outlines, and height-

[1] It is hard to believe that in these days of enlightenment an outcry should be raised against the cultivators of Christian art, attributing to them principles which they never maintained. The grand object, however, which they have in view, is well calculated to console and stimulate them in this grand pursuit. The accession of many learned men at home and abroad, has tended much to forward the advance of Christian art; and we would exhort them to read the three allocutions pronounced by Antonio Bianchini before the "Societá Romana degli Amatori e Cultori delle Belle Arti." Florence, 1839.

ening the colours, so as to efface altogether these delicate mezzotints, these lines so beautifully varied, and the simplicity of the drapery, in order to introduce all the defects peculiar to an age when art was in its decadence. Finally, when the convent was taken from the religious, the refectory was turned into a fruit store, to the great injury of this painting.[1] Notwithstanding, the beauteous head of S. John is admirably preserved, as is also the nude of the Redeemer.

But the history that he painted in the chapter-room, though known to very few, is well preserved, and deserves to be classed amongst the best works of the Angelico. Here he painted the Blessed Virgin seated, and, as in the Perugian picture, holding the Divine Babe on her knees. The Infant is nude, but the white veil that covers our Lady's head and bosom falls gracefully over Him. On her right is S. Dominic, standing; on the left S. Thomas of Aquino; both having an open book. The Founder of the Preaching-Friars (a mode of representing him unusual to this painter) has his chin covered with a flowing beard, and holds in his hand a lily, the emblem of his virginity—a simple composition, and well calculated to awaken devout feelings in the spectator. Few of the Angelico's works present more beauty in the expression of the countenances, or more negligence in the extremities and necessary accessories, than this does. The type of the Virgin is perhaps less ideal than usual; it reminds us of Raffaello and Pietro Perugino; and it is impressed with such beauty and majesty, that we are almost forced to kneel down and worship in presence of that image. Wonderfully beautiful are the faces of S. Dominic and the Infant; that of S. Thomas is the most

[1] Chron. S. Dom. de Fesulis.

beautiful in its design and colouring. But we no sooner set about examining the extremities of these figures, and the folds of the drapery, than we are obliged to ask ourselves, whether the same hand that outlined and coloured the countenances finished the rest of the work. So much so, that in many places we do not recognise these exquisite foldings of the robes so peculiar to Fra Angelico; and the feet of S. Thomas and S. Dominic look like a large blot. This led me to suspect that the same artist who had attempted to restore the fresco in the refectory, had likewise injured the drapery and the extremities of that in the chapter-room. A distinguished painter, who examined it with me, is of opinion that it exhibits evident signs of having been retouched at a later period.

These are the works that Fra Giovanni executed for the religious of his convent in Fiesole. He painted something for the churches of the city, and I am assured that in the church of S. Jerom there is a Madonna, a S. Jerom, and other saints, by his pencil. But so many works did this Father execute, writes Vasari, that one must wonder how any one man, even in many years, could have done so much, and so perfectly. It seems that the Florentines vied with each other to obtain some devout picture from the hands of the Angelico; and that the churches and oratories of the city sought them avidly is evident from a catalogue which is still preserved. During his sojourn in Fiesole, he indubitably executed the tabernacle that is now in Florence, in the Gallery of the Uffizj, near the entrance on the left hand. Baldinucci has given us a precious document, which appears to be a memorial or contract, made by the Guild of joiners, for whom it was destined. The celebrated sculptor, Lorenzo Ghiberti, was requested to furnish the design, which did

not prove to be very elegant. On the 11th of July, 1433, the Guild of joiners signed the contract for the painting of the said tabernacle in the following terms, "They have empowered Fra Guido, (his primitive name,) called Fra Giovanni, of the Order of S. Dominic in Fiesole, to paint a tabernacle of our Lady, to be painted within and without—ornamented with gold and silver—colours and metals to be of the finest description—all to be executed by his workmanship and skill—for which they will give 190 gold florins, or whatsoever shall appear to his conscience to be just. The figures are to be these furnished in the design."[1] This option of determining the price of the work, which they leave to his own conscience, clearly shows what a high opinion they had formed of the artist's honour. This tabernacle is six palms high by three wide. Its form is that of an armory; and it has two doors, with a very strong lock. As the contract stipulated, the painter coloured it within and without, with great profusion of gold and silver, so as to make it one of the most splendid things of its sort. In the interior he depicted Our Lady (life size) seated on a rich cushion shot with gold. The azure mantle that falls from her head to her feet, and covers her whole person, is equally adorned with gold embroidery. On the Virgin's knees sits the Holy Infant, clad in a beautiful tunic, and holding the globe in His right hand. Around the Virgin and Son, he introduced a troop of little angels, playing on various instruments; and they are so graceful that they seem to have come down from heaven. On the inside of the two doors he painted (also life size) S. John Baptist and S. Mark, and on the exterior S. Peter and S. Mark. This figure he repeated, because this

[1] Baldinucci, Notizie dei Professori del Disegno. Decenn. 2, p. 1, del. sec. iv. This tabernacle was removed to the gallery of the Uffizj, 1777.

Evangelist was the patron of the Guild, and he desired that, whether the tabernacle was closed or opened, they should have him always before their eyes. At foot of this armory, there must have been an embasement, with three histories, somewhat like the gradini that he was accustomed to attach to his pictures. In the centre was an Adoration of the Magi, and on the sides S. Peter preaching and S. Mark writing. The subject of the third picture was, a Sea in a tempest, and a Fury threatening the persecutors of the Evangelists. These three panels were removed from the tabernacle, and taken to the Gallery of the Uffizj. This work, though executed in what may be termed his grandiose style, is nevertheless defective in chiaroscuro; but in my judgment this may be accounted for thus. The Angelico, according to his custom, coloured the figures with light and transparent tints, but as they are on a gold ground, the excess of light that is reflected will not allow the eye to rest calmly on the paintings. This observation holds good in regard of some other works from his pencil, which, when taken out of the sombre, religious light of the churches for which they were executed, and exposed to the glare of the great windows in public Galleries, cannot produce the effect which they would doubtless have if viewed in their original position.[1]

Amongst the works of his youth, Vasari mentions three pictures which in his time were to be seen in the Certosa of Florence; two of which have been lost, and the third taken from the veneration of the faithful, is now exposed to gratify the curiosity of persons visiting the gallery of the Uffizj. We will speak of the first two

[1] This painting has been engraved by Signor Livy.

in the words of the historian—"One of the first works in painting executed by this father was in the Certosa of Florence, where he painted on panel, an altar-piece for the chapel of Cardinal Acciajuoli. It represents our Lady with her Son in her arms, and some angels at her feet who play on instruments and sing. On the sides are S. Laurence, S. Mary Magdalene, S. Zanobi, S. Benedict; and on the predella (base) are many little histories of these saints, executed with infinite diligence. In the same principal chapel are two other pictures by the same hand; in one of which is a Coronation of our Lady, and in the other a Madonna with two saints, in ultramontane blue—they are most charming." But as he does not make further mention of the Coronation, (which is still preserved,) we will endeavour to describe it, as it is one of the most splendid of the Angelico's productions.

This picture of the Coronation is about two palms and a half in height and breadth. In the upper part, a most lucent gold ray beams from the centre, and forms the ground of the picture; in the midst is the Blessed Virgin seated at the right of her Son. Instead of being clothed in white, as his crowned Virgins usually are, her mantle is azure, studded with very small gold stars: her hands are sweetly crossed on her bosom, and the head and whole person are gently bent in an attitude of affection and reverence. This idea is supremely mystical, and the artist kept the interpretation of it to himself. A troop of angels, beautiful as possible, encircle her, some playing on every sort of instrument; whilst others, hand in hand, move as in a dance. In the under part are two who profoundly adore, and offer incense out of thuribles; whilst two others wake melodies from their harps—from

the countenances and movements of them all radiate grace, ecstacy, and marvellous affection. In presence of this picture we are reminded of Dante's Vision:—

> "On every side the living flame decayed,
> And in that, midst their sportive pennons, wav'd
> Thousands of angels; in resplendence each
> Distinct, and quaint adornment. At their glee
> And Carol, smil'd the Lovely One of heav'n,
> That joy was in the eyes of all the blest."[1]

In the under part of the picture, disposed in beautiful order, he introduced on the right and left a great host of saints who, to use Allighieri's thought, rejoice in the sight, and in these celestial harmonies. On one side are S. Nicholas di Bari, S. Egidius Abbot, S. Dominic, S. Jerom, S. Benedict, S. Peter, and S. Paul, Apostles, with many others; on the other side are S. Mary Magdalene, S. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr, with many female saints, amongst whom he painted S. Stephen, Proto-Martyr, and S. Peter the Dominican Martyr, because the Church calls the former the protector of the weaker sex, and because the latter was illustrious for his singular love of virginity. No eloquence could describe the impressions which this work is calculated to produce. The heart has a language for which it cannot at all times find words, and we can never contemplate this picture without yearning for heaven. Oh! may all the paintings employed by the Catholic church be like to this: for we would be thus spared many of the invectives which those who are not of us, are accustomed to heap on our veneration for sacred images, which are often far more efficacious in inculcating virtue than even the words of man![2]

[1] Paradiso, Canto xxxi.

[2] It has been engraved excellently by Buonajuti of Florence.

Perhaps we would not err in classing amongst the best works that the Angelico executed at Fiesole, the painting for the nuns of S. Pietro in Piazza, which is now in the gallery of the Uffizj, near the entrance, and the Deposition from the Cross which is in the Academy of Design, in the gallery of the little pictures, marked No. 43. The design and composition of both seem to me to be much in the Giottesque style; and although they possess wonderful merit,—particularly the Deposition,—we refrain from describing them; since the first, if we except some little figures, bears great resemblance to the Perugian picture of which we have spoken; and as to the second, since we have to write of another Deposition, in every way far superior to it, we do not deem the omission unreasonable.[1]

CHAPTER VI.

Fra Giovanni and Fra Benedetto go to Florence—The building of the new Convent of S. Mark—Paintings by the Angelico for the Church and Convent of his Order, and for the city of Florence.

We have now arrived at the most splendid period of the Angelico's life. Well indeed does it merit this predicate, by reason of the number of his works, and the great perfection to which he had attained in design, chiaroscuro, and perspective. Here, however, we deem it our

[1] This Deposition was painted for the Confraternity of Holy Cross, (del Tempio,) and amongst the Marys and the disciples weeping over the lifeless body of the Redeemer, he introduced S. Dominic and the Blessed Villana, a tertiary of the Dominican Order, who was buried in S. Maria Novella. This picture was placed in the Gallery of the Academy, A.D. 1786. Richa, Notizie Ist.

duty to introduce the reader to that portion of pictorial history that records the termination of the ancient, and the beginning of the modern school. A memorable epoch truly, and for the imitative arts, one of supreme glory. Had its duration been longer, history would have nothing to record that could equal it. For whilst the people were struggling between tyranny and liberty; whilst philosophy was engaged with its deliriums about judicial astrology, and multiplying comments on the Stagirite; whilst the civil code was cruel and oppressive, and religion itself suffered desolation from the schism, the arts were gradually approaching that sovereign excellence to which the genius of Leonardo da Vinci and Raffaello were destined to raise them; till, with the rapidity that signalised their advancement, they began to fall into decay and ruin.

When the Angelico left his early instructors, in order to take the Dominican habit in Fiesole, the old school of Giotto may be said to have exercised sovereign sway over the arts; but so tenacious was it of the ancient methods and primitive traditions, that it did not make that progress which might have been reasonably expected during such a lengthened period. Stefano of Florence, was the only one who had attempted to solve the great difficulties which accompanied the management of light in perspective, and his attempts had no very remarkable results, and were not certainly equal to the requirements: nevertheless, the labours of many had sowed the seeds of the new reform; which being lovingly cultivated by glorious genius, soon gave an increment to art. In two respects they improved design and colouring; and to effect that amelioration in the former, they applied themselves to the study of perspective, not according to vague and uncertain theories, but with the aid of Geometry, in

which Piero della Francesca and Fra Luca Pacioli, the Minorite, were deeply skilled. Paolo Uccello learned it from Giovanni Manetti, Brunellesco from Paolo Tuscanelli, and Father Ubertino Strozzi, the Dominican.[1]

Sculpture and goldsmith's work improved colouring as far as lights and shades were concerned. It was thus that Masolino da Panicale who, being a goldsmith, painter, and sculptor, and consequently obliged to model in plaster, learned how to give relief to his figures by means of shading. He it was who helped Ghiberti to polish the bronze gates of S. Giovanni. Hence, in the Renaissance of art, sculpture preceded and aided painting, as it did in the days of Niccola Pisano, in the thirteenth century. The glory of this reform is entirely attributed to Masaccio; but on calm reflection it must be admitted that he found the way smoothed for him, and many of the chief difficulties that attended painting almost removed; whereas, Masolino, after finding art poor and defective, elevated it marvellously. Of him we may well affirm what has been said of Giotto, that he invested painting with new attributes, changing it from the antique to the modern. Vasari lauds Masolino's works for their grace, the grandeur of their style, the softness and unity of their colouring, and the relief of the figures, although he does not think their design perfect. It is, nevertheless, indubitable that Masaccio followed the precepts of his master, and dated the commencement of the modern school. They and their followers gave a new character to composition; so much so that the figures were no longer disposed symmetrically on a horizontal line or on inclined planes, as was usual with the

1 This distinguished Friar is honourably mentioned in the Chronicles of S. M. Novella. He was a renowned mathematician and engineer in his times. Borghigiani, Cron. Ann. ad ann. 1413.

Giottesque—on the contrary, their figures were placed gracefully in various attitudes round the throne of the Virgin and the Saints. They likewise attempted the nude, but timidly, and they varied the arrangement and the robing of the figures; giving to the heads more life, and a certain simplicity that must ever charm us. Abandoning the use of gold grounds they substituted elegant fabrics, graceful landscapes, and a variety of beautiful accessory adornments. All the painters of this truly golden age are remarkable for that rare sobriety in which there is nothing superfluous, and nothing defective; and the eye reposes tranquilly, and the heart affectionately on their beauteous works. But it is not for us to repeat what others have already written, or to describe how at a subsequent period the study of all the branches of design, and the imitation of the antique and real, insensibly caused artists to substitute the means for the end; or how when art had reached its climax, sentiment began to be utterly disregarded. But let us return to where we left off. When Giovanni Angelico set out from Fiesole for Florence, to paint in the new convent of S. Mark, (1436,) Masolino da Panicale was dead; Masaccio in all probability was decorating the Carmine;[1] Brunellesco was erecting the wondrous cupola of S. Maria del Fiore; and Lorenzo Ghiberti had just finished these gates of the baptistery which Michelangelo pronounced to be worthy of Paradise. Donatello and Luca della Robbia were at this period vieing with each other in sculpture and works in plaster. The sight of so many

1 Lanzi says that it was not likely that the Angelico, who was then of mature age, would have set about learning from Masaccio, who was still very young; nevertheless the history of art records many examples of this. —*Hist. of Painting.*

monuments of splendid genius soon taught the Angelico that he had yet much to learn; and that in order to render his celestial meditations still more acceptable to the people, he must needs apply himself intently to the study of perspective and chiaroscuro. And though now matured in years, and with a name bruited abroad, he did not fail to devote himself to such studies. He therefore sat down to contemplate Masaccio's works in the Carmine; nor need we observe that Leonardo da Vinci, Buonarroti, Raffaello, and others, learned their earliest lessons there.[1]

The convent of S. Mark, whose history is identified with that of religion, literature, arts, and politics, was founded towards the close of the thirteenth century. It had belonged to the Silvestrine monks, till the beginning of the fifteenth, when, at the prayers of the Florentines, supported by Cosimo dei Medici, Martin V. took it out of the hands of its original owners, (for whom he provided on the other bank of the Arno,) and granted it to the reformed religious of the convent of S.

[1] The Church of the Carmelites—

"In this chapel wrought
One of the Few, Nature's Interpreters,
The Few whom Genius gives as Lights to shine,
Massaccio; and he slumbers underneath.
Wouldst thou behold his monument? Look round!
And know that where we stand, stood oft and long,
Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself;
Nor he alone, so great the ardour there,
Such, while it reigned, the generous rivalry;
He and how many as at once called forth,
Anxious to learn of those who came before,
To steal a spark from their authentic fire,
Theirs who first broke the universal gloom,
Sons of the Morning."—*Rogers' Italy.*

Dominic in Fiesole.[1] In the year 1436 Pope Eugenius IV., who was then in Florence, "ordained that the Dominicans should take possession of it in great state and solemnity. Three bishops of Taranto, of Trevigi, and Parentino, accompanied the monks, who were preceded by the mace-bearers of the Signory, sent thither to add to the pomp. Father Cipriano da Firenze then took formal possession of it in the name of his religious society."[2] Then it was that Cosimo dei Medici employed Michelozzo Micchelozzi, the architect, to build the actual convent and library on the site of the old one, and also to enlarge the church and convent, on which he would have lavished his well-known magnificence, had he not been requested by the friars to have regard to their modesty and religious poverty. On the buildings he expended thirty-six thousand gold ducats; and, during the period of the works, he gave, for the support of its new inmates, three hundred and sixty-six crowns annually. He also gave fifteen hundred more for the purchase of books, as well as for the miniaturing of the Choral-books; not to speak of other sums which he bestowed to meet various contingencies. Little did the magnificent Cosimo imagine that he was then preparing an asylum for that terrible Savonarola, who was destined to dispute the dominion of Florence with his posterity!

In 1437 the architect commenced the building, by constructing twenty cells for the religious, and restoring the roof of the church, which was in a ruinous condition. The principal chapel having been completed in 1439, they set about decorating the church; and it was at this period that the frescos of Pietro Cavallini and Lorenzo

[1] Annali del Conv. di S. Marco.

[2] Richa. Notiz. Ist. delle Chiese Fior., v. 7.

Bicci, which adorned it, were destroyed. Of the former, happily there still remains a most beautiful Annunciation, which proves that the same idea guided the hand of the unknown painter of that which is in the church of the Servites and of Cavallini, in S. Mark's, so as to lead Vasari to believe that they were both by the same artist. In 1441 the restorations and the adornments of the church must have been completed. In the following year, on the Feast of the Epiphany, it was solemnly consecrated by Cardinal Niccolò Acciapaccio, Archbishop of Capua, in presence of Pope Eugene IV., and the College of Cardinals. The building of the convent was finished in 1443, but, according to Vasari, in 1452, and, according to Father Richa, at a period posterior; for he tells us that only the first cloister and the dormitories over it were finished in 1451, and that the foundation having been discovered to be too weak, the whole was taken down, and built out of the new. A statement which I believe to be quite true. The first cloister and upper dormitories were painted by the Angelico, and this must have been before 1445; since, about that time, he set out for Rome, where he died. We must, therefore, follow the authority of the Chronicle. The last work was the library, which, for its architecture, is not surpassed by any in Florence. It is eighty braccia long, by eighteen wide, and its ceiling is supported by two rows of columns of the Doric order. This was the first that was ever opened in Italy for the public benefit; and its librarian was the celebrated Tommaso di Sarzana, afterwards Pope Nicholas V., who, as we shall see, loved and esteemed the Angelic Painter.[1]

[1] This library possessed the greatest quantity of Greek works then in Italy; hence it was called La Greca. When the Republic decreed Savona-

Having determined the dates of the building, we will speak chronologically of the paintings which were subsequently executed by Fra Giovanni; as we will thus be enabled to correct some errors that have escaped Baldinucci and Professor Rosini. The first-named asserts that the paintings in the cloister of S. Mark should be reckoned amongst the productions of his youth; whereas it is indubitable that, if he began to paint them even in 1436, that is, when the Dominicans obtained the convent, the Angelico must have been forty-nine years of age; but, supposing them to have been executed in 1440, (and I, for my part, think it very likely,) he could not then have been less than fifty-three. As to what Rosini states, namely, that Fra Giovanni had finished the painting of the chapter-room in 1415, (if this be not a typographical error,) I hold it to be false, for the reasons already alleged.[1]

When the Preaching-Friars got possession of their new domicile, they all firmly resolved to deserve well of the Florentine people, who had given them such signal proofs of their esteem and veneration. S. Antonino realised this by his preaching, as well as by the moral and historical works that he published, and the Angelico and Fra Benedetto, by these glorious developments that shall evermore class them amongst the greatest artists of the world. And, indeed, if the religious of S. Marco could not boast that they erected the church and convent by their own architects, as their confreres of S.

rola's death, all the books, MSS., &c., were taken from the religious. This happened May 8, 1498. They were restored, however, in the October of 1500. The inventory made by Tommaso Sarzana (Pope Nicholas V.) for Cosmo de Medici, has been discovered.

[1] Baldinucci, Notiz. dei P. del Disegno. Vita di F. G. Angelico.—*Rosini Storia della Pittura*, v. 11.

Maria Novella had done, they might be justly proud of having decorated the one and the other by the agency of their own painters, of whom they had many.

It was, probably, during the restoration of the church of S. Mark that Fra Giovanni commenced painting the picture for the great altar of that church. It is that of which Vasari speaks in the following terms: — "But singularly beautiful is the picture of the grand altar of that church, for the Madonna not only excites to devotion, as do the saints who encircle her and resemble her, but the predella, on which are histories of SS. Cosmas, Damian, and others, is so well executed, that it is impossible to imagine anything more diligently elaborated, or in which the figures could be more delicate or better defined."

In this picture, where there is a perceptible deviation from the Giottesque method, it appears that the Angelico made an attempt to approach the new school, not so, however, as to diminish the religious effect of the work. For, instead of placing the figures that are on the right and left of the Virgin's throne, on a horizontal line, in symmetrical order, as he was hitherto wont to do, he has here grouped them in a variety of attitudes, as though they were paying court to the Queen of Heaven. On the right are S. Dominic, S. Francis, S. Peter, martyr; on the left S. Laurence, S. Paul, and S. Mark, the Evangelist, with some angels; and in the foreground, kneeling, are SS. Cosmas and Damian, whom we find in almost all the paintings he produced in Florence, as they were the patrons of the Medicean family.

This painting would appear to have been executed in his grandiose style; but we cannot now judge of its merits, as far as colouring, relief, and expression, are concerned. It has been much injured, I know not

whether by damp or retouchings; so much so, that scarcely a trace of its ancient beauty remains. The gradino, it seems, was divided into many parts, and some of them were placed on the altar of S. Luke, in the chapel of the Painters, in the cloister of the Annunziata. Perhaps, to the same belonged that history of SS. Cosmas and Damian healing the infirm, which is now in the gallery of the Little pictures in the Academy of Design, marked 39, and the other of the Burial of the Five Martyrs, marked 45, which is a sequel to the History of the Martyrs, which may be seen on the said gradino in the chapel of S. Luke.[1] Neither the Memoirs of the convent nor Vasari state that he executed any other work for his church: but, instead of doing so, he set about decorating the convent. And most certainly he was well skilled in fresco-painting, and as polished in compositions of this sort as in these of which we have been speaking. Nay, more, it would appear that in his latter years he preferred this style, which requires great promptitude of intellect and hand; and that he possessed both, is easily seen by the works which he produced in Florence, Rome, and Orvieto. These, his last works, shared a better fate than the others; for, as ultramontane depredators could not carry them away, they were left in the holy temples to excite the piety of the devout worshipper; and, what is more, they were thus preserved

[1] In this same Gallery is another picture by the same, better preserved than the preceding, in which he repeated the same subject, varying only some figures. Much merit as this picture may possess, it is very inferior in the figure of the Virgin and Child, whilst it excels in these of S. Francis, and S. Peter Martyr, which are divinely coloured and designed. It has been engraved in the collection of Antonio Perfetti, and illustrated by La Farina. Another Picture by the Angelico in the same Gallery of the Little pictures, marked 31, is worthy of consideration. The subject is the Virgin and Infant. The heads of both are beautiful and graceful.

from the desecration of being exhibited in the public galleries side by side with obscene productions.

As we mean to speak of the frescos which he painted in the cloister and cells of the religious, which are over forty in number, we have deemed it wise to mention only such as are best worthy consideration, that we may avoid prolixity. Another reason for this is, that we have every hope of seeing them all engraved very soon by Signor Antonio Perfetti, of the Royal Academy.[1] In the first cloister, which is now called S. Antonino's, (because it is ornamented with many histories of the Saint, by various masters,) opposite the entrance, he painted a Crucifixion, life size, and S. Dominic embracing the holy rood; the figures in which are designed and finished with great excellence. Nothing can be more happy than the Angelico's style of depicting the Crucified Redeemer; for, instead of following the example of his contemporaries, who pourtrayed Him as dead, and with evident marks of excessive agony on the countenance and whole person, and all the contortions of a violent and cruel death, he, like the painters of the ancient school, represents Jesus as still living, pouring most copious streams of blood from His holy wounds; and he impresses on the face such calm, such serenity, and such tender affection, that every one must see how the Man-God truly suffers for His love of us,—a sentiment which is calculated to awaken compunction in the heart

[1] A great many, and certainly the most perfect of these frescoes, designed and coloured by M. Laborde, have been published in Paris: "Fresque du Couvent de Saint Marc, à Florence; par Beato Angelico da Fiesole, dessinées sur les Origineaux par M. H. de Laborde, et reproduites en Chromo-Lithographie, par les Procédés de MM. Englemann et Graff, par MM. Moulin, Blanke, Colette, et Sanson, sous la Direction de M. Paul Delaroche; précedés d'une Notice Historique sur Beato Angelico, par Ludovic Vitel."

of the spectator. Over the door that leads to the sacristy he executed a half-figure of S. Peter Martyr, indicating silence. He has the forefinger raised to his mouth; but far more impressive, and far more calculated to invite us to silence and recollection is the severe, I would almost say threatening, aspect of the Saint. Over the other doors he also executed, in half-figures, S. Dominic, with the discipline in his right hand, and the Rules of the Order in his left; and a Pietà, or Jesus Christ rising from the sepulchre, and pointing to the wound in His side. A figure of wonderfully religious effect; for which the Mystic School had great predilection, as they frequently repeated it in and out of Florence. Over the door of the ancient Guest-house, he painted our Lord, in the garb of a pilgrim, receiving hospitality from two Dominicans. The three figures are so beautiful, so devout, and so well coloured and designed, that I do not hesitate to class them amongst the most perfect works he executed for S. Mark's. Then over the other door there is a half figure of S. Thomas of Aquino; but this, as well as that of S. Dominic, is very much injured.

But the history that he painted in the chapter-room is alone sufficient to demonstrate the splendid genius and piety of the artist; nor do I remember to have seen any where such a grand and sublime conception, despite the tenuity of the means, so efficaciously expressed. Others may excel him in colouring, shading, and in the details of drapery; but no other man shall ever surpass him in filling the human bosom with tenderness and sorrow.

On a vast superficies of thirty-two palms in length, and little less in height, he painted the Crucifixion of our Lord, in figures as large as life. According to Vasari, he was charged by Cosimo dei Medici to execute this work. The composition, however, was left to the choice

of the painter; for he did not like to be trammelled by the severe canons of art in whatever concerned the unity of the subject and the truth of the history. The scope of all his works was to move and instruct. Nothing that tended to this result was omitted by him, and he regarded everything else as extraneous to the object he had in view.

Any of the schools that followed, which would have undertaken such a difficult theme, would, doubtless, have filled the scene with executioners, soldiers, scoffers, horsemen, and an immense multitude of spectators; neither would they have omitted a fair landscape with beautiful perspective, — in a word, they would have sought to please by a diversity of objects and a resemblance to the real. They cared little for touching the heart, or causing a single tear to flow: not so with the Angelic, who followed the traditions of the ancients, and the impulses of his piety. His sensitiveness would not allow him to cater to the tastes of the Medici, who were the patrons of those who painted the nude according to the antique. The subject was too sacred and too dear to the painter. Before applying himself to his work, he prostrated himself at the foot of the crucifix, like S. Thomas of Aquino, before solving questions on religion, metaphysics, and law; the tears streamed from his eyes, his heart throbbed audibly in his breast, his soul crossed the confines of this world, and he then arose, seized his pencil, and set him to his labour. No matter how it resulted, he never retouched it, for he regarded the first conceptions formed in his mind as heavenly inspirations, to which he could not add or alter without irreverence.

In the chapter-room, of which we speak, he painted the Redeemer on the Cross, and on either side of Him the two thieves. At the foot of the Cross, and on both sides of

it, he introduced a great multitude of Saints. The figure of the Redeemer is one of rare beauty and noble form: the nude is slightly Giottesque; nevertheless, it is, in my judgment, far superior to the carnose forms of the Cinquecentists, not excepting even these of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta. The nude of the two thieves is inferior; but on the countenance of one of them, you read the assurance of pardon, whilst that of the other bears the stamp of blasphemy and a despairfulness that seems a foretaste of hell. At the Cross's foot, on the right, he painted the Virgin, who has swooned, and is supported by S. John and one of the pious women. Magdalene throws herself forward to help her, and clasps her in her arms. This is a group so beauteous and so touching that it does not yield to Razzi's Swoon of S. Catherine da Siena—a composition that fills every eye with tears. Then follows a beautiful figure of the Baptist, well designed and well coloured, pointing with the index to that Saviour whom he had preached to the multitude in the wilderness. S. Mark kneeling, points to the book of the Gospels, in which he has described the life and death of the Redeemer. The last figures are SS. Laurence, Cosmas, and Damian. On the left a new scene, not less tender and devout, presents itself. Here are eleven saints, for the most part Founders of the Religious Orders, who seem to meditate the Passion of Christ, and it may be that the Angelico introduced them to show that they had partaken copiously of the fruits of the Redemption; and as the chapter-room was meant to be the place for admonishing, correcting, and inspiring the religious with fervour for the observance of conventual discipline, perhaps, he desired to present them these saints as grand models for their imitation. And first we see S. Dominic prostrate at foot of the

Cross, wrapt in profound contemplation; a figure excellently designed and coloured. Then follows S. Zanobi, bishop of Florence, who meditates the vaticinations of the prophets, realised in the Redeemer, to whom he points with his finger. That bald old man, with white beard, wasted and emaciated by years and fastings, is the great Jerom, in whose breast the love of the Cross blunted the keenest passions, and who seems to beg aid in his most direful need. Then comes S. Augustin, who meditates and writes. The Patriarch of the Franciscans, the poor one of Christ, is prostrate on the ground, in the most overwhelming dolor: a wonderful figure, in which there is indescribable affection. S. Benedict is in deep meditation; but I know not whether the Passion of the Lord or the revival of monastic discipline in the West has most of his thoughts. S. Bernard lovingly gazes at the Crucified, and, with both hands, clasps a volume to his bosom—that dear volume into which he has poured the tender effusions of his heart. S. Romuald, bending neath the weight of years, supports his feeble body on a staff, and seems buried in some profoundly sad thought. A solitary, that I take to be S. John Gualberto, sobs and weeps. The last are two Dominican Saints, S. Thomas of Aquino, who contemplates the sublime mystery which saved the human race, and of which he wrote so wisely; and S. Peter Martyr, whose gaping wound tells how he gave to Christ *blood for blood*. What is still more remarkable in this work is, that the common grief pervading all the saints, finds, in each of them, a different expression, according to their respective characteristics. In St. Jerom we see it warm and impassioned, in S. Francis and S. Bernard, tender and expressive; and in S. Thomas of Aquino, sublime and meditative. This, indeed, is a work as worthy of a great philosopher as it

is of the Angelic painter: a work that reminds us of the Theban Aristides, who boasted that he could paint the soul and its passions. It proves, however, that Fra Giovanni had begun to adopt the improvements which were introduced into art at this period in Florence. The figures in this composition are remarkable for flowing drapery, as also for the expression of the heads, not to speak of the relief and great power of the design. I must observe, however, that I am not satisfied with the extremities, in which there is a negligence not unusual to him; nevertheless, whenever he wished he removed such blemishes. Let us advert, too, that this work bears evident marks of retouching; and what is still worse, the primitive ground, which may have been azure, was removed and substituted (when and by whom I have not been able to discover) by one of glaring red, which has injured the outlines of the figures.

In order to develop still more effectively this devout meditation, the painter executed, on the ten hexagons that surround the arch of the ceiling, ten half-figures of Prophets and Sybils, holding certain scrolls with words relative to the Passion of our Lord; and they are as beautiful and graceful as it is possible to imagine. On the frieze that runs under the fresco the entire length of the façade, he executed, in ten small circles, the portraits of S. Dominic and the illustrious men of his institute. We have elsewhere told how the Dominicans of the convent of Trevigi, a century before, had caused Tommaso da Modena to paint similar works in the chapter-room of S. Niccolo, of which there is a mediocre engraving in Father Federici's book. The friars of S. Mark's desiring to have a series of portraits, sent to Trevigi to procure copies of these executed by the said Tommaso da Modena. Fra Angelico painted S. Dominic

in the centre of the picture, supporting with both his hands, the trunk of a tree, the branches of which extend, right and left, thirty-two palms; and from which hang down sixteen medallions. It is to be deplored that, in times subsequent to the Angelico, some one removed the names which he had originally inscribed, and introduced others nowise relevant to the personages whom he represented. At present we read on the right the names of Innocent V., Cardinal Hugo, Father Paul of Florence, S. Antonino, the Blessed Jordan of Saxony, the Blessed Nicholas, (the provincial,) the Blessed Remigio of Florence, and the Blessed Buoninsegna, the Martyr. On the left we find these of Benedict XI., the Blessed John Dominici (Cardinal), the Blessed Peter della Palude, (called the Annotator,) Albertus Magnus, S. Raymond de Pennafort, the Blessed Chiaro da Sesto, the first Roman provincial, S. Vincent Ferrar, and the Blessed Bernard, Martyr, probably one of the three slain at Avignon, in 1240. The Saints have an aureole, and the Beatified, rays of gold.[1] We do not need much critical acumen to perceive that the name of S. Antonino must have been added at a much later period; for independently of the fact that this picture nowise resembles the various portraits of the Saint, the Angelico could not have painted the holy Archbishop with an aureole, or the insignia of an archbishop, whilst he was still living, and nothing more than a simple religious of the convent of S. Marco. More-

[1] For a very learned dissertation on this department of Christian iconography, v. Father Oudin's Archeologie Chretienne, Bruxelles, 1847. We here transcribe as much as we deem necessary on the subject: "Les signes characteristiques des divers personnages en Archeologie, sont *la gloire*, *le nimbe*, *et l'aureole*. Par le mot *Gloire*, on entend ordinairement, dans un sens generique, un ornament que les artistes, les peintres, et les sculpteurs mettent, soit autour de la tete, soit autour du CORPS de quelques personnages."

over, under the name of S. Antonino, we can trace the remains of a very ancient inscription. We may also question these of S. Vincent Ferrar and the Blessed Giovanni Dominici; or, at least believe, that the aureole of the former and the rays of the second were introduced at a more recent period. These portraits are very beautiful but very much injured, and particularly in the eyes.[1]

The Chronicle of the convent of S. Marco mentions another painting by Fra Giovanni, which he executed for the refectory of the same convent. It was a Crucifixion, and probably a repetition of that in the refectory at Fiesole, with the Blessed Virgin and S. John on either side.[2] It no longer exists, and we may suppose that it was destroyed to make room for the great fresco by Antonio Sogliani, which represents S. Dominic seated at table with his brethren, and served by angels. This work, executed in 1534, is amongst the best productions of this painter, who was a very happy copyist of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, and in some instances excelled Il Frate.

But by far the most remarkable of Fra Giovanni's works—singularly remarkable for the elegance of the figures—are these frescos in the convent which can bear comparison with the most excellent productions of our age, renowned for the number and ability of its artists.

"Nimbe en archeologie, c'est le cercle lumineux dont les peintres ou les sculpteurs ornent la tete de la Divinitè ou des Saints.

"L'Aureole est le nimbe de tout le corps, de meme que le nimbe est l'Aureole de la tete," etc.

[1] During the French occupation, the soldiers extracted the pupils from the eyes of all the figures. They did the same to these of the beautiful gradino of the life of S. Niccolò in Perugia, which, as we have already said, was carried off to France.

[2] Annal. S. Marci. fol. 6.

He determined to adorn the cells and dormitories of the religious with subjects calculated to elevate their souls and hearts to God, to keep them always in mind of their heavenly destination, and of the glorious examples given them by the Saints. This idea, in all likelihood, was suggested by S. Antonino. We rejoice that we are able to give the reader a vivid notion of these simple, yet wonderful works of the Angelico, as they have hitherto been unnoticed by the historians of art, or seem at least to have been little known to them. Their subject was not, as M. Montalembert supposes, the life of the Blessed Virgin, but that of Jesus Christ, and he barely gives us as many passages out of the history of the former as were necessary to illustrate that of the Son. They are taken for the most part from these thirty-five histories of our Lord, which he painted on the doors in the Annunziata,[1] with the addition of a Dominican Saint, according to the devotion of the religious who inhabited the cell.

We will now follow the order of the history, but not that of the cells, and confine ourselves to a notice of the principal pictures, leaving the others to be described in Signor Perfetti's work. The first that presents itself is an Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, in the upper dormitory, the figures of which are somewhat less than the life-size. On a superficies, ten palms in length, he painted the habitation of our Lady, surrounded by a vestibule, which rests on Corinthian columns, much in the style of that which he executed at Cortona; and though the perspective is not perfect, it is better than that of the former. On the outside is the little Garden of Mary, enclosed by a thick hedge and railing; a figure employed by the Church to denote her unblemished virginity. The Holy Maiden of Nazareth is seated on

[1] I. E. on the doors of the armory in that church.

an unadorned chair; the colour of her tunic is a pale red, her azure mantle falls in folds over her knees, her arms are crossed on her bosom, and her countenance, if not remarkable for great beauty, is resplendent with the calm serenity of Paradise. Her fair hair falls gracefully on her shoulders, and so humble and devotional is her whole attitude, that in the presence of this dear image, we almost feel the Angelical Salutation, "Hail full of Grace," trembling on our lips. But that no one should be so insensate as to refuse her that homage, our painter inscribed the words at foot of the painting.[1] The figure of the Archangel is truly beautiful. A sweet smile plays on his celestial features, and bending one knee, and crossing his arms on his breast, he seems to await anxiously the announcement of Mary's consent: it is thus that Dante has described him.[2] Whoever has seen the beautiful Annunciation in the church of the Servites, or the admirable one by Cavallini in S. Mark's, will readily admit that the mystic school in treating such subjects was infinitely superior to the painters of succeeding ages. Truly, indeed, has an illustrious writer described why it is that modern artists never succeed in painting true love, chastity, faith, hope, or the peace of the just. (All of which are wonderfully embodied in

[1] The words are, "Virginis intactæ dum veneris ante figuram, pretereundo cave, ne sileatur Ave." And at top, "Mater pietatis et totius Trinitatis nobile triclinium. Maria."

[2] "Say, who that angel is, that with such glee
Beholds our Queen, and so enamoured glows,
Of her high beauty, that all fire he seems,
. . , . In him are summ'd
Whate'er of buxomness and free delight
May be in spirit, or in angel met:
And so beseems, for that he bare the palm
Down unto Mary, when the Son of God
Vouchsafed to clothe him in terrestrial weeds."—
PARADISO, c. xxxii. (Cary.)

this work.) With what truth has he asserted that, "our love is very often a mere relaxation of hate; our faith, the faith of critics; our hope, a violent passion; and our calm, more threatening than the tempest."[1]

The Nativity, a most charming work, and in admirable preservation, is a repetition of that in the Annunziata church. The Presentation reminds us of Giotto's conception, which may be seen in his little pictures in the Academy of Design. Nothing could be truer than his manner of pourtraying the affection of the Mother, or the jubilee of the aged Simeon, clasping the Promised One in his arms. Although this picture has sustained injury at the hands of some one who removed the primitive ground, it is still very beautitul, particularly in the heads of Simeon and the Mother. But, where the Angelico may be said to have excelled himself, (as is admitted by all,) in design, chiaroscuro, colouring, and truth of expression, is in the Adoration of the Magi. In this work it would seem as if he had undertaken to prove that he was not prevented by the difficulties of art from arriving at perfection in a certain style of composition; but rather by the severe maxims that he professed. Nay, more, he clearly shows that he was able to avail himself of all that was beauteous in Masolino da Panicale and Masaccio, without violating, in the simplest particular, any one of the canons of Christian art. Beautiful as are the two little pictures on the same subject which are now in the gallery of the Uffizj of the Florentine Academy, this is transcendently superior to them.

Cosimo dei Medici had caused an apartment to be built for him in the convent of S. Marco, in order that

[1] Tommaseo, Nuovi Scritti.

he might have greater facilities for his intercourse with S. Antonino and the two artist-brothers. This apartment was the abode of Pope Eugene IV., when he assisted at the consecration of the church, in 1442. It is therefore very probable that this painting, allusive to the Feast of the Epiphany, on which day the consecration took place, was executed precisely at that period for the adornment of the Pontifical chamber. Fra Giovanni Angelico felt himself bound to give a proof of his genius which would correspond with the magnificence of the two guests, and bear evidence of the love with which he cultivated these arts, of which Cosimo was naturally, and politically, a munificent patron.

The back ground presents a distant view of the mountains of Judea; and, in order that nothing might seduce the eye or the soul from the contemplation of the principal subjects, he divested them of verdure and foliage. Hollowed in the living rock is seen the miserable grotto which first sheltered the Saviour. The poor Virgin is seated, and has her Divine Son on her knees. On her left is her spouse, who contemplates an offering made by one of the Kings. Before them, prostrate on the ground, in most profound adoration, is a hoary-headed king, the first of the Magi, who, having laid down his diadem, approaches his lips to the Divine Infant, who, with childish grace, blesses him. Behind him is the second, who kneels, and evinces anxiety to perform the same act of devotion. The third, the youngest of the three, is standing. Then follows a long train of footmen and servitors, admirably arranged and grouped; some of whom discourse animatedly; and in order to show that these princes were skilled in astronomy, he placed in the hand of one of them an armillary sphere, as though he would thus seek to account for that

wonderful star which had lighted their way to Bethlehem. This idea is beautifully expressed. The others are engaged with the horses; but nothing can be more graceful than the last figure on the left, which represents a man endeavouring to gaze at the star, beaming over the grotto, whilst he uses his hand to protect his eyes against its blinding rays. Speaking of the artistic merits of this work, we may say that the Blessed Virgin and Infant are supernaturally beautiful. Nothing could have been better designed and coloured than the first of the Magi, nor can anything better express his burning desire to kiss the holy feet of the Redeemer. The two other figures of the kings possess equal merit for the nobility and grace that beam from their countenances; but no words of ours could describe the perfection of that group of courtiers and pages, who, gathered together, converse about the wondrous event. In fact one knows not which should be most praised, the beauty of the attitudes, or the arrangement of the draperies, that are in every respect worthy of the most celebrated painter. No one will refuse to recognise in the whole composition a happy imitation of that life and grace so peculiar to Masolino; and these characteristics are chiefly noticeable in the relief which the Angelico has given to all the figures. The extremities are well designed; nor does the entire lack a single beauty calculated to gladden the heart or the eye. We grieve to think that time has done much injury to this work; nor do I know if it be in man's power to preserve it from approaching ruin.

Of great merit are also the following histories—The Sermon on the Mount—The Transfiguration—The Institution of the Sacrament, in which, following the method of the Giottesque, he painted the Apostles seated at the mystic Supper, and Jesus with the chalice in his left

hand whilst he presents to them the consecrated host with his right. No one may ever hope to excel him in depicting the wonder, the tender devotion and impatient desire of the disciples to receive that divine food. In the Prayer in the Garden, in order the better to express the weakness of the Apostles at that terrible moment of the Lord's dereliction, he represents them as buried in profound sleep, whilst Our Lady and Martha in the distance pray and meditate. The same encomiums may be bestowed on the Treason of Judas; and still greater on the history where he painted the Redeemer spurned by Herod and his army. As the profound devotion of the Angelico would not allow him to represent the sacred humanity of the Redeemer exposed to fiendish outrage and derision, he studied to make His divinity appear under the lowly garb of His mortality. He therefore painted Jesus seated in great majesty on a throne, but, though blindfolded, the transparency of the veil allows us to see His eyes, which are stern and threatening. His right hand holds the globe, and the left, instead of a scepter, a bunch of rods. Of the scoffers we can only see the hands and faces. The white garment that covers Him is beautifully draped. Seated at the foot of the throne are the Dolorated Virgin and S. Dominic, on the right and left; the latter, whose attitude is graceful, holds an open volume on his knees, and profoundly meditates the humiliations of the Divine Word. Motived by the same tender devotion, instead of exhibiting the Redeemer writhing under the scourger's lash, he represents Him bound to the pillar; and places before Him S. Dominic, who inflicts the discipline on his own naked shoulders. He painted the Crucifixion in many of the cells; and in that inhabited by the writer of these Memoirs, he represented Christ ascending the gibbet, to

show the spontaneity of His death, and Mary fainting and falling into the arms of Magdalene, at foot of the Holy Rood. In the contiguous cell he painted the Doloured Virgin and S. John weeping bitterly; then follow portraits of S. Dominic and Thomas of Aquino, absorbed in the contemplation of this ineffable mystery of love.

Omitting the others, I will now speak of three which, after the Adoration of the Magi, excel all these that we have been describing. In the *Marys at the Sepulchre*, following the Evangelical description, he painted a tomb hollowed out of the living rock, within which we behold the white marble sarcophagus of the Redeemer uncovered. In the upper part of the same is Jesus Christ, Risen, and holding in His hand the triumphal ensign. The pious women who had come with spikenard and perfumes to bestow their last offices of love on the Redeemer's body, are three figures excellently designed, and expressive of such profound grief, that they awaken all our sympathies. The most beautiful, however, apparently not the work of human pencil, is the angel who, seated on the threshold of the Sepulchre, gracefully tells the disconsolate women, that Christ has risen. He also introduced S. Dominic meditating the glory of that Resurrection; and this figure is truly angelical. The upper part of this fresco has suffered some injury. The *Descent to the Limbus of the Fathers* that he painted in Saint Antonino's cell, according to Rosini, has more power and poetry than any of his other works. On the threshold of a most gloomy cave, is seen the noble figure of the Redeemer, who triumphantly strikes down the infernal gate, which crushes Lucifer, just as we see him represented in Memmi's picture in the chapter-room of S. Maria Novella. This idea was derived from the Greeks by the Giottesque.

The Saviour stretches out His right hand to Adam, behind whom comes an immense multitude of souls in great jubilation. As often as I have contemplated this painting, in which there is great truth of expression united to a most happy conception, so often have I said to myself that nature destined the Angelico to embody none but tenderest and devoutest ideas; nay, more, I am persuaded that he possessed such a fervid imagination, and such abundant imagery, that in these respects he may compete with the greatest artists.

The last of the frescos, and most beautiful of them all, in which he displays such mastery in depicting the ineffable joys of heaven, is the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin. This, indeed, is far more celestial than his picture on the same subject now in the gallery of the Uffizj. We, however, will endeavour to describe how the artist developed his devout conception; for, indeed, we confess our inability to express the sensations which this glorious work has awakened in our heart. He painted the Virgin seated on a white cloud, which is overarched by a charming rainbow; She is robed in white, her arms are folded on her bosom, a gentle smile is on her lips, and she leans gracefully forward towards her Divine Son. Mid all the glory, she is the humblest of all. The Word is seated by her side, and seems to crown her. He does not, however, hold the golden diadem in his hands; on the contrary, he barely touches it with the extremity of His fingers, as though he had ordered it to go and encircle His mother's temples—a sublime idea that reminds us of the creative *Fiat*. He also wears a white robe, which is shaded with a light tint of chiaroscuro, and appears to be as subtile as the air. In the drapery of these figures the Angelico has excelled himself. At their feet he painted three Saints on the right and three on the left;

they also stand on a white cloud, and are wrapt in extacy, contemplating this glory. Here he has more closely followed Dante; for he disposed these six figures on a semicircular line, as though they constituted one of these garlands of Blessed spirits who incessantly sing and dance round the throne of the Eternal. They are SS. Paul, Thomas, Francis, Benedict, Dominic, Peter Martyr; and they all have their eyes and hands raised to heaven. From their countenances beam joy and beatitude. Whosoever stands in presence of it, may almost fancy himself translated to the society of the Blessed. The tinting of this history is so delicate and transparent, and the pencilling so fine that it looks more like a celestial vision than a painting; and, perhaps, it appeared as such to the devout artist in the act of colouring it.[1] On the wall of the second dormitory, he also painted the Blessed Virgin and her Son surrounded by many Saints. The figures are admirably designed and finished.

These, in my opinion, are the best frescos that he painted in the Convent of S. Marco; they are all well preserved, but unfortunately the same cannot be said of these that he executed in the cells on the right of the second dormitory, which have been so injured that many of them are lost; and others reduced to a most deplorable state by retouchings.

This precious gallery — this glorious monument of Italian Painting, was near being destroyed at the beginning of the current century by the barbarians who came to *civilize* Italy; and who, in their wisdom, concluded that a piazza of larger dimensions than the actual, was of far

[1] There is a copy of this Coronation, by Father Serafino Guidotti, a religious of this convent, who, following the example of Fra Giovanni, Angelico, and Bartolommeo della Porta, gives great promise of future excellence.

greater importance than all these works by the Angelico and Fra Bartolommeo della Porta. The patriotism of Signor Alessandri saved us from this Vandalic demolition.

CHAP. VII.

Paintings by Fra Angelico for the other Churches of Florence.

Our painter was not so intent on embellishing his own church and monastery, that he would refuse to gratify his friends who, from time to time, sought some devout image at his hands; on the contrary, such was his kindliness of disposition, that he was wont to say to those who importuned him, "see that the prior be satisfied, and I will not fail to oblige you." The Dominicans of S. Maria Novella desired that their church, which was adorned by the works of the most illustrious Florentine artists, should not lack some from the pencil of their confrere, who was now regarded as one of the most splendid of the Christian artists. They, therefore, invited him to paint some history in the nave of their church; and he accordingly depicted S. Dominic, S. Catherine of Siena, and S. Peter, Martyr, together with some little histories in the chapel of our Lady. These works, which were either on panel or in fresco, no longer exist, having been destroyed, perhaps, at the restoration of the church, when (together with the frescos of the Giotto school) the Twelve Apostles, that stupendous work by Masaccio, were

[1] On the site of the actual altar of the Rosary, there was formerly a Crucifixion by the chisel of Masaccio, and on the sides some frescos of Saints by the same. The Crucifixion was removed to the Sacristy, where it is at

wholly cancelled. Somewhat more fortunate were the little pictures on panel which Fra Giovanni had executed many years before for Father Giovanni Masi, a religious of that same convent; these were four reliquaries and a painting for the Paschal candle.[1] At present only three of them remain, the fourth having been carried off, and the ornaments of the candle lost. I have never looked at the first without experiencing a sense of admiration and love for the painter; they are so beauteous, so devout, and so graceful. In one of them he painted the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin, and a choir of Angels. The manner in which he has depicted these celestial spirits is incomparable. At foot of the throne there is a multitude of saints, so beautifully coloured that nothing more exquisite can be imagined. On the base, he painted the Virgin, and S. Joseph adoring the Infant, with angels on either side. The second reliquary he divided into two compartments; in the first he painted an Annunciation; and in the second, the Adoration of the Magi; and it is wonderful how he could have enclosed so many graceful figures within such narrow limits. On the base are some Virgins with our Lady, who holds the Infant in her arms. In the third he repeated the subject of the Tabernacle, which is in the gallery of the Uffizj, with some slight deviation. In this, the Virgin, instead of being seated, is standing, surrounded by a choir of Angels, who sing and play on

present, and the paintings are hidden from view by an inferior work of Vasari, painted in 1570, for which he received 1800 lire.

[1] "Habemus et multas plurimorum sanctorum reliquias quas quidam Fr. Joannes Masius Florentinus multæ devotionis et taciturnitatis vir, in quatuor inclusit tabellas, quas Fr. Joannes Fesulanus pictor cognomento Angelicus, pulcherrimis beatissimæ Mariae Virginis et Sanctorum Angelorum ornavit figuris." Ib. Fr. J. Masius, 1430.—*Biliotti Chron. MSS.*

various instruments. On the base there are half figures of S. Dominic, S. Thomas of Aquino, S. Peter Martyr, and two angels. And whilst on the subject of these little pictures on panel, we will briefly advert to these which are in the gallery of the Uffizj; and which, in my opinion, were the gradini of larger pictures; for he never painted any Saint, male or female, whose life he did not narrate in little histories at foot of the picture. We have already alluded to the Adoration of the Magi, and the two histories of S. Mark, which were taken from the Tabernacle that belonged to the Guild of Joiners. There are also in the same gallery, two of the Blessed Virgin, and one of S. John Baptist, that is the Espousals, and the Transit of the Virgin: and Zaccharia calling the child *John*. Of the first, Professor Rosini writes in these terms:—"It (the Virgin) derived such purity, and such loveliness of features from the hands, or rather from the heart of Fra Angelico, that in simple expression of most chaste affection, it excels all his antecedent works, and leaves us to doubt whether he was surpassed even by Raffaello in the picture now in the Brera.[1] But oh, how beautiful is that in which he describes the Transit of Holy Mary! It must be seen in order to form an idea of Fra Giovanni's skill in miniature, to which the diligent execution of this work assimilates it. He has here faithfully followed the traditions of the ancient masters in all that regards the life of the Virgin, and the whole composition may be regarded as a reflex of the tender feelings of the artist's heart, while engaged in colouring it. He painted our Lady extended on the bier; and to show that death could nowise injure that most holy

[1] Storia della Pittura, v. 2, p. 2, p. 257.

form, wherein the Son of God abode; he depicted her radiant in loveliness, and as though she were sleeping, tranquilly. She is encircled by the Apostles who have come to offer her the homage of their tears; and their countenances exhibit sorrow intense and resigned. At the head of the bier are two Angels, who act as acolytes, and between them is an Apostle who pronounces the eulogium of the defunct. But the most charming figure of all is that of Jesus Christ descending from heaven in great effulgence, and clothed in an azure chlamys, studded with countless golden stars, who having lovingly taken the Soul of Mary into His arms, (the painter represented it in the form of a beautiful child,) blesses it before conducting her body into heaven. This idea was developed by him less happily in Cortona.[1]

We will close the series of the works which he executed for the city of Florence, with two pictures by his pencil which may be termed chefs-d'œuvres of Christian art. Speaking of this painter, I have to regret that nature has not gifted me with a power of eloquence capable of conveying an adequate idea of his marvellous excellence; so much so, that whenever I fix my eyes on the Deposition from the Cross, or on the Final Judgment that he has delineated so admirably, I deem it wise to be silent: for in truth language has no words capable of describing the beauty of these productions which seem to have been conceived in a moment of divine ecstacy. They are a

[1] The modern historian of our paintings has given us an engraving of a Transit of the B. V. M., by Paul Veneto, painted in Vincenza, 1330, in which the Soul of Mary is represented in the form of a beautiful child, surrounded by a choir of Angels. The three pictures—the Espousal, the Transit, and the Nativity of S. John—have been engraved in the Galleria di Firenza Illustrata. Serie i. Tav. 30, 105, 106.

celestial harmony that inebriates the soul with ineffable delight; and the more profoundly it is felt, the more difficult it is to express it.

The painting of the Deposition from the Cross, which has been removed from the Church of the Holy Trinity, for which it was executed, to the Academy of Design, is about seven palms high by eight wide; its upper part is pointed, or to speak more intellegibly, is in the form of three triangles, which are divided from the principal painting by a gilded cornice. The points and cornice are beautifully chiselled and painted, the former being ornamented with many little histories, and the latter with some minute figures of Saints, somewhat larger in their dimensions, and certainly far more perfect than those which he executed in the Perugian painting already described. Contrary to his usual idea, he here represents Mount Calvary clothed with flowers and verdure, as though he meant to signify that the footprints and blood of the Redeemer caused the most beautiful vegetation to flourish on that accursed hill. That such was the painter's idea may be collected from the fact of the distant mountains in the back ground (the perspective of which is admirable,) being treeless and herbless, if we except here and there some isolated palm. On the opposite side is a good perspective of Jerusalem, designed and finished with incredible diligence. The figures are disposed in three groups; in the centre are two disciples, who, standing on the steps of the ladder that leans against the Cross, lower the Redeemer's body; at the ladder's foot two disciples support the sanctified remains, and the youngest of the two who betrays such wonderful emotion is the Evangelist John; a fifth prostrate on the earth adores the body, and raising his hand to his breast seems to say, "*I should have died this ignominious death!*"

The group on the left presents six figures, one of which holds the thorny crown in his right hand, and in his left the bloody nails wherewith the Redeemer's hands and feet were digged; whilst he exhibits them to an old man who contemplates them in profound dolor. This thought has been most happily expressed by Donatello in the basreliefs on the pulpit of San Lorenzo; and also by Pietro Perugino in that glorious Deposition from the Cross, which I regard as the most precious ornament in the Pitti Gallery. Two of the disciples gaze intently on the dead body of Christ, and in their midst is one who, unable to restrain his tears, buries his face in his hands and sobs almost audibly. "If thou weep'st not now, say, what will cause thy tears to flow?"[1] . . . . . The group on the right is composed of pious women. Whosoever would find the tender and loving Magdalene let him seek her at the feet of Jesus. The Angelico represents her supporting them and imprinting her last kiss on them. Behind her, is the Mother. Oh! what a woe-begone Mother! Grief and agony have so wrung her heart, that the eye knows not on which of the two objects it should rest—the lifeless body of the Lord, or on her, the most afflicted of women! Who can behold this work and not feel love and sorrow stirring in his heart? Two women hold the winding-sheet, and two others contemplate the poignant anguish of Mary; but the last figure at the side is the most beautiful of all; it is that of a woman whose whole person is robed in a violet mantle, which she gracefully gathers over her bosom, thus revealing only the exquisite beauty of her face. The figure of the Redeemer is perfection itself, and nothing can exceed the softness of the lines or the delicate transparency of the mezzotints. The nude which exhibits

1 Se non piangi, di che pianger suoli?

the stripes of the scourge and the marks of the nails is most correct. The anatomy is well defined; nor is there a single trace of that harshness that offends us in the productions of the Giotto school.

In the triangles are three histories, which the intelligent in art suppose to be the work of a more ancient painter. In the centre one is the Resurrection; in that on the right, Magdalen and the Marys: and, on the left, the "Noli me tangere." In the cornice, partly whole and partly half figures, are twenty saints of rare beauty.[1] To fix the attention of the spectator, he introduced, at the foot of the work, some passages of the Scripture allusive to the death of the Redeemer.[2] Like that of the Adoration of the Magi, (in fresco,) the design of this picture is correct, and the colouring very beautiful. The attitudes, as well as draperies, are elegantly disposed, and the countenances are noble and expressive. The extremities, likewise, are well designed; but the perspective wants that gradation of tints that improves distance by the diminution of light and the addition of shading. Let us observe, also, that the tinting of the flesh, being very languid, and that of the robes most brilliant, the eye is somewhat hurt by the contrast. This, however, was not a defect peculiar to him alone, but to the entire of that school. Nevertheless, I believe that no one will deny what D'Agincourt has asserted of the Angelico—that he surpassed in liveliness of colouring all the painters *in tempera* who preceded him; and that he united the two most opposite qualities of this art, that is, the delicate touches of the miniaturist with the bold and easy pencil-

[1] These have been engraved by Perfetti and illustrated by the author of this work in 1843.

[2] Plangent eum quasi unigenitum, quia innocens estimatus sum cum descendentibus in lacum. Ecce quomodo moritur justus et nemo percipit corde!

ling of the frescoist; so much so, that if you contemplate his pictures from a near point of view, you will imagine that they belong to the former, but, if from a distance, that they are the work of the latter.[1]

It now remains for us to speak of that Final Judgment, which of all the Angelico's works, appears to me to be the most stupendous. From the days of Niccola Pisano, to these of Michelangelo, this subject tasked the art and genius of the most celebrated artists, who, for the most part, vied with each other in painting the joys of the Just, and the despair of the Doomed, as Allighieri had sung them. Indeed they had almost exhausted themselves in depicting the tardy disenchantment and appaling tortures of the reprobate: in inventing fanciful agonies, and unprecedented writhings; so much so, that the heart and soul must shudder at sight of that terrible scene which Signorelli produced in Orvieto and Buonarrotti at Rome. Man, it is true, is conversant with sorrows and woes; and he can well depict them in verse, or on canvas; but when he undertakes to paint joy, his imagery is defective, nor does he know in what guise he should

[1] We here subjoin the reflections of M. Montalembert on this splendid work, "What a superabundance of love of God, of immense and burning contrition must that dear Angelico have had the day that he painted this! How he must have wept and meditated that day in the retirement of his cell, on the sufferings of our Divine Master! Every stroke of his pencil, every tint seems to have been so many acts of love and sorrow, springing from the depths of his soul. What a touching sermon is not the sight of such a picture! Oh, delicious masterpiece!—oh, what a happiness, what a grace, to be able to contemplate this marvellous representation of the Passion of our Lord! . . . . Others look on it merely as a work of art. I have derived consolations and profound lessons from it."—*Vandalisme et Catholicisme dans l'Art.* This Deposition was excellently restored in 1841, by Francesco Acciai.

develop it. Wherefore, as the drama of the Final Judgment consists of two most distinct acts; that is, of extreme joy, and of extreme sorrow, it was almost impossible to convey a lucid idea of the former, for since God has not revealed the joy of heaven to man, how will he, most miserable, essay to describe it in words or tintings of the pencil.[1] To Giovanni Angelico alone, this power was given; and none of those who preceded or followed him have surpassed him in this most difficult experiment.

There are four pictures by him on this subject, two in Rome, and two in Florence. The first is in the gallery of Prince Corsini—it is that mentioned by Bottari in his notes to Vasari's Life of Fra Giovanni; the second was in the collection of the late Cardinal Fesch; the third, is in the Academy of Design in Florence, it is a compartment of the doors in the Annunziata Church; and the fourth is actually in the possession of the Camaldulese Monks in S. Maria degli Angioli. All of them are splendid, but in my judgment the last is the most perfect, and it was for many years suspended over the sedilia, or seat used by the priests during the celebration of the chaunted Mass. It is about seven palms long, and its summit is in the form of three arches, the central one being largest, and the two side ones smaller. The Final Judgment occupies the central one; in that on the right, he painted Paradise; and in that on the left, Hell. The figures are of the dimensions of these which he painted on the gradini of his pictures. The Judge of the living and the dead is seated in great majesty in the centre.

[1] In the unique collection of original designs of the Italian Painters by Andrea Tafi, (which amounts to over 27,838,) there is a final Judgment executed with a pen by the Angelico, different from any other that I have seen.

He is encircled by choirs of angels, cherubim and seraphim, and you behold the Virgin, with arms crossed on her bosom, turning on her Son a look of love, and making her last intercession for miserable sinners. Ah, what words could describe her trepidation for such an immense section of the human race? Aleft and right of that tremendous judgment-seat, enthroned on clouds, are Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, the series of whom is closed by S. Dominic and S. Francis. From the gold ground of the picture springs a torrent of light that reveals the glory of the Elect. At the feet of our Lord an angel raises on high the triumphal ensign of the Cross, whilst two other blow trumpets, whose sound causes man to shake off the sleep of ages, and to arise from the grave. The Supreme Judge is in the act of fulminating His malediction against the Reprobate. Let not the reader fancy HIM with His right hand stretched out, or that there is anything like human vengeance on His features, as others would depict Him; on the contrary, there is nothing irate in His expression; He merely turns away His eyes from the Doomed, and, by a waive of His hand, commands them to withdraw for ever from His presence. A most simple act this, but, surely, far more eloquent and sublime than any terrible menace. A brief space divides the Elect from the Damned. Michelangiolo painted both naked in the Sixtine: Zuccheri, in the cupola of the cathedral at Florence, represents the damned naked, and the elect clothed; and Luca Signorelli follows the former in his Judgment in Orvieto, employing only as much drapery as was required by modesty. Giovanni Angelico clothed all his figures equally, thus, not only preserving decorum, but greatly heightening the moral and religious effect of the whole composition; for we are thus enabled to recognise those

whom the painter placed amongst the lost, as well as those who are made the recipients of eternal joy; from which the spectator may learn a salutary lesson. Thus Dante, not satisfied with having recounted the agonies to which *his* damned were sentenced, or the blisses which *his* elect enjoyed, determined to give us the names of the most distinguished amongst them, and to narrate, also, the virtues and the vices according to which they were adjudged. He thought, no doubt, that he might thus awaken admiration for the one, and detestation for the other. It would appear that the Angelico was influenced by a similar motive. Hence, you behold amongst the accursed, persons of every age, grade, and condition, and especially many ministers of the sanctuary; a fact that should not startle us, when we recall the licentious days of the schism already alluded to in this work. Hence it is that he has placed so many monks, prelates, cardinals, and Antipopes amongst the damned; for, indeed, we cannot think that a painter of his well-known sanctity could have imagined the disturbers of the peace of the Church in these times worthy of any other location. Dante did the same, for other reasons, and also to impart a great moral lesson. It has been well remarked that the countenances of the doomed do not exhibit the fury and despair that is given them by other painters; on the contrary, we find them *undeceived* and overwhelmed with grief for having forfeited the supreme good that was in store for them, as well as the elect, if they had observed the divine commandments. Strange and bizarre is the form in which the Angelico painted his demons; and it must be confessed that, in this portraiture, he lacked imagination. He divided Hell into seven circles, (or bolgi,) in each of which, according to the nature of the seven capital vices, there are various

torments and tormented. And this portion of the painting, if it be not in every respect perfect in its composition, yields to that which follows in design and execution. The idea of finding the "Emperor who sways the realm of sorrow" in the depth of the abyss is somewhat poetical, and is evidently taken from Dante, for, indeed, the three-headed monster, who

> "At every mouth his teeth a sinner champed,
> Bruised as with pond'rous engine; so that three
> Were in this guise tormented,"[1]

was not such a figure as would have presented itself to the imagination of Fra Giovanni, who seems to have contemplated little else than celestial beauty. But where this painter triumphs and establishes his title to the name of Angelico, with which the people honoured him, is on the right side of the picture, where we behold the Elect. Who can see these graceful little figures and not be enamoured of virtue? Who is it that does not yearn to taste the holy and ineffable joys of these blessed beings; who, having fought the good fight, and completed their term of exile, are now approaching their true country to enjoy that reward for which they longed, and for sake of which they had suffered so many afflictions? They all have their eyes and arms turned towards their Redeemer, and they seem to bless and thank Him for having placed them among his Elect. There you see princes, warriors, pilgrims, bishops, pontiffs, and members of the religious Orders: and here, as in all his paintings, he has given a distinguished place to the children of SS. Francis and Dominic. But more charming than even this, are the kisses and embracings which the Elect interchange with the Angels who protected and guided

[1] Inferno, canto xxxiv. (Cary's.)

them on the path of peril. Kneeling, they clasp each other in heavenly affection. The idea of the painter, probably, was to exhibit the angels, venerating in these bodies, humanity glorified. The greetings between the angels and the elect terminated, we see them linking hands and gracefully dancing on a sweet meadow, enamelled with most beauteous flowers. Their garments glisten with innumerable little golden stars; the head of each is wreathed with a garland of white and red roses, whilst a brilliant little flame burns on the forehead of each angel. Then light, aery, graceful, and even during the dance absorbed in ecstatic contemplation, carolling and singing they advance towards the celestial Jerusalem; and the nearer they approach to it, the more etherial and luminous do their bodies become; till at last, arrived at the gates of the holy city, they appear to be transmuted into most subtile and resplendent spirits; and then, two by two, holding each other's hand, they are introduced into eternal beatitude. Where did the painter find this sweet conception? How was he able to develop such varied beauties? We confess our inability to give or imagine a reply.

These are the principal works that he executed for the city of Florence is fresco and on panel; but, certainly, we have not enumerated them all, since it appears from an ancient catalogue, in the Chronicle of S. Domenico, in Fiesole, that he produced others, of which we are all but ignorant. For example, there was in the church of the Holy Trinity, along with the "*Deposition*," another work, the subject of which is unknown. In the church of S. Egidio, there was also one. There were some minor pictures in the Oratories and Confraternities of the "Children," many of which congregations were supported by the Florentines. Some of them were in S. Maria

Novella and one in S. Marco. Vasari makes no mention of these paintings. At the end of this Memoir we will give an inventory of Fra Giovanni's works, in order to gratify the admirers of the Angelic artist.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Angelico is invited to paint in Rome, probably by Pope Eugene IV. and is detained there by his successor, Nicholas V.—His Paintings in the Vatican, the Minerva, and in Orvieto—His Death, Eulogy, and Disciples.

THESE works had rendered the Angelico's name so celebrated throughout Italy, that Pope Eugene IV., who had already admired many of his productions in Florence, desiring to decorate the Vatican during the last years of his pontificate, invited him to set out for Rome.

The silence of the ancient as well as the contradictions of modern writers cause us to question the precise period of his arrival in Rome. Vasari would have us believe that he was summoned to the eternal city by Pope Nicholas V.; and Rosini, following Vasari, states, that he arrived there in 1447.[1] Leandro Alberti, a much earlier writer, favours this opinion; nevertheless I think there are very grave reasons for believing that he went to Rome in the last years, or at least in the last months of the reign of Eugene IV. The first of these historians, who seemingly forgets all he had written, after narrating the Angelico's arrival at Rome, tells us that Pope Nicholas V., knowing the sanctity of his life, offered him the bishopric of Florence, which was then vacant; and that our friar supplicated his holiness to provide somebody

[1] Storia della Pittura Italiana, v. 2, p. 2.

else, as he did not think himself competent for such an onerous office, adding, at the same time, that there was in his Order a man of great sanctity and remarkable for his love of the poor, on whom such a responsible dignity might be properly conferred. The Pontiff, knowing the truth of all this, yielded to the suggestion of the Angelico; and thus was Fra Antonino, of the Order of Preaching-Friars, raised to the Archiepiscopal See of Florence; and he proved to be a man of such extraordinary sanctity, that he was canonized by Hadrian VI.[1] Supposing Vasari's statement to be true, in order not to fall into a serious anachronism, we must go back to an anterior epoch, in order to determine at what time the Angelico set out for Rome. Let us remember, therefore, that Zabarella, Archbishop of Florence, who was succeeded by S. Antonino, died in 1445, during the pontificate of Eugene IV.[2] therefore this journey could not have been undertaken in 1447, as Rosini asserts; but granting that Rosini's narrative is not only false, but very unlikely—as it has appeared to some—I think, nevertheless, that he was invited to Rome by Eugene IV.; and that he was retained there after the death of this Pontiff by Nicholas V., his successor. As a proof of this I will cite the contract between Fra Giovanni and the builders of the cathedral of Orvieto, from which it appears that he was in Rome in 1447, as the said contract, by which he bound himself to paint in Orvieto, is dated in the former city. Eugene IV. died in February; and on the sixth of March, of said year, he was succeeded by Tommaso da Sarzana, of the Preaching-Friars, who assumed the name of Nicholas V.; but as it was not at all probable that the Angelico

[1] V. Vasari.

[2] S. Antonino was consecrated Archbishop of Florence, March 13, 1446.

would have been invited to Rome *immediately* after the elevation of the foresaid to the pontifical throne, or that he would have, immediately on his arrival there, entered into a contract with the builders of Orvieto, I deem it far more reasonable to suppose that he was sent for by Eugene IV. in 1446, and that he was retained by his successor to complete the works he had already commenced. Thus we might easily reconcile the conflicting opinions.[1]

The name of Nicholas V. shall be always venerated by the lovers of science, letters, and arts; and it was but just to inscribe his cenotaph with that high encomium—"He restored to Rome its golden age." He was the first to set that glorious example, which being followed by Julius II. and Leo X., made the eternal city the sanctuary of all that is beautiful and noble. The tiara was scarcely on his head when he invited to his court the most distinguished men of the age. Vespasiano, the Florentine, tells us that great numbers of learned men flocked to his court, either invited thither, or of their own accord. He employed many writers to copy rare works; and he gave ample pensions to others whom he engaged to translate the Greek authors into Latin, and also to correct them according to the best exemplars.[2] He was equally munificent in his patronage of the arts, and particularly of architecture, as the many splendid buildings which he erected in

[1] M. Rio (Poesie Chretienne,) is of the same opinion.

[2] V. Muratori "Rer. Italic. Scriptores, v. 24, p. 279." To Guarino, the translator of Strabo, he gave 1,500 crowns; and to Perotti, for the translation of Polibius, 500. He promised Francesco Filelfo, a house and villa at Rome, and 10,000 gold crowns, if he would undertake to give a Latin version of Homer. Diodorus, Zenophon, Thucidides, Herodotus, Appianus Alexandrinus, Plato, and some of the Greek holy Fathers were introduced to Latium, by the munificence of Nicholas V.—V. Spoiorno. Stor. Lett. della Liguria, and Sismondi's Italian Republics.

Rome can testify. Bernardo Rossellino, and the celebrated Leon Battista Alberti were employed by him to conduct many fabrics; and he commissioned the latter to furnish the design of a new and vast Basilica, under the invocation of S. Peter; but he saw only its foundations laid. The greater glory was reserved for Bramante, by Julius II.

The Angelico found in this Pontiff not only a Macenas, but an affectionate friend and sincere admirer. He commissioned him to finish the works which had been interrupted by the death of Eugene IV. It appears likely that he was assisted in their execution by his disciple, Benozzo Gozzoli, who, as we shall soon see, followed him to Orvieto, since he was not only skilled in the manner of the Angelico, but was likewise far-famed for his admirable paintings of buildings, landscapes, and such accessories as the condition of art in that age allowed. They painted two chapels in the Vatican; in the first, which was called, of the Most Holy Sacrament, (subsequently taken down by Paul III.) Fra Giovanni frescoed some histories of the life of our Lord, and introduced portraits of many of the distinguished men of these times, which works would have been lost, had not Giovio caused them to be removed to his museum. Amongst the portraits, we find these of Pope Nicholas V., the Emperor Frederick, who was then in Italy, Fra Antonino, who was afterwards Archbishop of Florence, Biondo da Forli, and Ferrante of Aragona. In the second chapel, (now called, "of Pope Nicholas V.,") he painted some histories of the protomartyr S. Stephen, and S. Laurence, in the manner which we will now describe. He coloured the whole ceiling in ultramarine blue, and studded it with many golden stars, according to the Giottesque, and he introduced the four Evangelists, and eight Doctors of

holy Church. On the right, are S. John Chrysostom and S. Bonaventure. Above these are S. Gregory and S. Augustin. On the left, in the under part, are S. Athanasius, and S. Thomas of Aquino, and over them S. Ambrose and S. Leo, the last of which figures is almost wholly effaced. All these Doctors are represented as standing erect under a little Gothic temple. The histories of the Martyrs he executed in six compartments, wherein he painted the principal facts of the lives of two of them, in order to show the great resemblance that the history of the one bears to that of the other. They are as follows:—S. Peter at an altar giving the chalice to the first consecrated Deacon, S. Stephen, who receives it kneeling—The holy Martyr giving alms to the poor. In the under part, he introduced Pope S. Sixtus. In the upper part is the Sermon of S. Stephen, and the same Saint before the Jewish high priest, who forbids him to announce Christ Crucified. In the under part he introduced Pope S. Sixtus blessing S. Laurence, and giving him the treasures of his church to dispense them to the poor, at the very moment that two armed men are striking the door in order to gain admittance. Then comes the holy Deacon, giving alms to a great multitude of poor and infirm. On the left wall he painted the Stoning of S. Stephen, and in the under part S. Laurence before the tyrant, who, pointing to the various instruments of torture, strives to shake his constancy. In another compartment, he executed a little window, through which we can see the Saint in his dungeon, baptizing his fellow captives. Finally, comes the martyrdom of S. Laurence. Under these little histories, he painted a rich ornamentation of fruits and flowers, variously intertwined and alternated with the heads of angels and the triple crown roses and stars exquisitely arranged complete the adorn

ment of this work. I doubt not that Benozzo Gozzoli, who was celebrated for such decorations, was the author of these. Of the merits of the histories, we will now hear two of the most celebrated writers on art. M. Seroux D'Agincourt[1] speaks of them thus:—"The ability with which these frescos are finished is truly prodigious, and nothing can be more delicious to the eye than their colouring. The shadings are not strong, but the chiaroscuro is harmonious. On near inspection, these frescos have all the graces of miniature. At a distance, the vigour of their tints produce the effect of a bold and free pencilling," etc. He then lauds the artist for the beauty of the expression, in which he recognises a happy imitation of Masaccio. He likewise praises the perspective of the buildings.[1] The criticism of M. Rio is as follows:—"The work which excels that of which I speak, (the reliquaries in S. Maria Novella) I will not say in beauty, as that is impossible, but in dimensions, and perhaps, too, in historical importance, is the great fresco in the Vatican, in which Fra Angelico, who was invited to Rome by Eugene IV., painted, in six compartments, the principal facts of the life of S. Stephen and S. Laurence, thus uniting these two Christian heroes in the same poetic commemoration, as it is the custom of the faithful to invoke them conjointly, since one and the same sepulchre enshrines the ashes of both in the ancient Basilica of San Lorenzo, outside the walls of Rome.

"The Consecration of S. Stephen, the Distribution of the alms, and far better still the Preaching, are three paintings as perfect in their style as any of the grandest productions of the most distinguished masters; it would be difficult to fancy a group that could excel the life and

[1] Histoire de l'Art, v. 4, p. 427.

attitudes of these figures, and particularly of the women who are seated and listening to the holy preacher. If the bestial fury of the murderers who stone the Saint be not adequately expressed, we should attribute it to a glorious impotency of that Angelic imagination which teemed with ecstacies of love, and was never accustomed to these dramatic scenes in which it is necessary to depict violent passions.

"The figures are disposed with equal grace and nobility, and this merit that is always to be admired in all the works of the Angelico, is here, if possible, still more admirable, since he has paid marked attention to the costume and other adjuncts belonging to the period, which he copied from the monuments of the Primitive Church. Not so, however, can we speak of the inferior compartments in which the painter has given the histories of S. Laurence."[1] We will finally observe with Professor Rosini, that in this work, more than in any other, he seems to have enlarged his style, and to have carried it to such perfection as to dispute the palm with the noblest geniuses of that age. For the altar of the same chapel he also painted a Deposition from the Cross, which, I believe, is now lost.[2]

Whilst Fra Angelico was engaged at the histories we have been describing, the Pontiff, from time to time, came to inspect them, and as much as he admired his artistic genius the more did he admire his virtues. History has preserved an anecdote which we will give on the authority of Fra Leandro Alberti and Vasari. "Fra Giovanni," says the latter, "was a very simple and most holy man, and as a proof of his goodness we may state

[1] Loc. Cit. p. 198.

[2] Some of these frescos have been engraved in Professor Rosini's History of Painting. The copies in D'Agincourt are far inferior. Vide Tav. CXLV.

that, being invited by Pope Nicholas to dine with him; he excused himself, saying that he could not eat meat without the permission of his prior: not thinking on the authority of the Pontiff."[1] It would appear that it was during this familiar intercourse that what we have related about the Archbishopric of Florence occurred. Leandro Alberti, however, the most ancient of Fra Giovanni's biographers, makes no mention of it. It appeared to F. Guglielmo Bartoli to be not only false but very unlikely, for two reasons: the first of which is, that Vasari states the offer to have been made to Fra Angelico by Nicholas V.; whereas Eugene IV. was Pope at the time of the supposed presentation. The second is, that the Angelico, though a most holy man and distinguished painter, did not possess that learning so essential to such an exalted dignity. As to Alberti's silence, I will observe that he has omitted much of the Angelico's life, and instead of narrating his works he expends all his powers in eulogising the good religious; this however does not detract in the smallest degree from the truth of whatever he says in reference to him. That Vasari, instead of writing Eugene IV. should have written, Nicholas V. will not be a matter of surprise to any one who is acquainted with the negligence of this biographer; who is generally correct as to facts, but very heedless as to dates. Let us adduce an example of this; in his life of Giovanni Pisano, he informs us that this artist sculptured the marble monument which was erected in the Church of S. Dominic in Perugia, to Pope Benedict IX. who died about that period. Now every

1 It is not likely that the Pope would have asked him to dine with him, as Vasari says; but I think we may rely on what Albertus states, namely, that the Pontiff, seeing him overworked, exhorted him to use meat instead of the meagre fare prescribed by the Dominican Rule.

one must know that Giovanni Pisano could not have been engaged at this work, since there was not only an interval of years but of centuries between the sculptor and this Pontiff. Transpose a figure, or instead of IX. read XI., and you shall have arrived at the truth, as Benedict XI. died in the days of the said Giovanni. In like manner Vasari has erred in stating that the Archbishopric was conferred on S. Antonino by Nicholas V. instead of Eugene IV., but despite this confusion of names the fact may still be undeniable, provided the Angelico was invited to Rome by Eugene IV. as we have endeavoured to show. Bartoli subjoins that he was not very learned, or in other words, that he had made no ecclesiastical studies; this, however, is a very gratuitous assertion, for he may have had more learning than his well known modesty would allow him to display, and he certainly must have had that amount of it which is always required in a priest belonging to an Order famed for its cultivation of sacred studies. Those who have perused the history of that period must know that ecclesiastical dignities of the highest Order were often bestowed on the *most illiterate* of men, and they at least will not be astonished at reading that the Pontiff desired to confer the Archbishopric on a holy painter. I will now give my own opinion on this subject. Francesco Castiglioni, a man remarkable for piety and learning, who was the intimate friend of S. Antonino, tells us that on the death of Zabarella, the Pope saw so clearly into the intrigues of parties looking for the dignity, as to feel himself justified in leaving the See vacant for fully nine months, in order to provide some one who was really deserving of it. He then goes on to say that "*Some religious men* proposed S. Antonino to his Holiness, which so accorded with the Pope's own ideas, that he

immediately elevated him to the archiepiscopal throne, from which I infer that, if Eugene IV. did not really offer the Archbishopric to the Angelico, as Vasari states, it is very likely that S. Antonino was proposed by him. Hence, if we cannot laud the painter for his profound humility in declining such an honour, we can well praise his prudence for having advised the Pontiff to consecrate a man who was an exemplar of virtues to his own age, and to these that shall follow."[1]

The histories described above, in the two chapels of the Vatican, were only commenced when the death of Eugene IV., and the election of Nicholas V., took place, in the year 1447. In the beginning of May, or at the end of April, the works were suspended, by order of the Pontiff, and it is likely that Fra Giovanni, in order to escape the insalubrious heats of Rome, during the summer months, wrote to the builders of the cathedral of Orvieto, that he would undertake to paint in that duomo, during the months of June, July, and August. More joyful news could not have reached the superintendents, who were desirous of inviting the ablest artists of the day. A painter of Fra Angelico's celebrity, then actually in the service of the Pontiff, was naturally regarded as a most invaluable accession to the number of the great geniuses then employed at the decorations of this renowned temple. We have already told how splendid were the sculptures produced by the chisel of Guglielmo da Pisca in this edifice, towards the decline

[1] Epist. Francisci Castilionensis presbyteri secularis ad fratres S. Dom. de Bononia super vita Beati Antonii de Florentia, ejusd. Ord. Arch. Florent. "Ita novem mensibus ambiguus, suspensusque animo Romanus Pontifex perseverat: cui tandem subjicientibus viris religiosis personam Antonii, cum jam antea virtutem hominis cognovisset, statim eorum consiliis acquievit." This letter may be seen in the Acta Sanctorum, (the Bollandists.)

of the thirteenth century. In 1362 Fra Giovanni Luca Leonardelli, of the third Order of S. Francis, an eminent mosaicist, was invited thither. In 1401, Father Francesco di Antonio, a Cistercian monk, worked at the mosaics and glass-painting of this cathedral, and when the Angelico arrived, it is probable that Father Francesco Brunacci, a Benedictine, one of the most celebrated glass-painters recorded by history, was actually working within the sacred precincts. It would appear, indeed, that the religious Orders had determined to vie with each other in the embellishments of this temple dedicated to Mary. On the 13th of May, the Council of the superintendents met to deliberate on Fra Angelico's proposal. He had offered to bring with him his disciple Benozzo Gozzoli, who had been working with him in the Vatican, together with some younger pupils. When this was acceded to, they resolved to engage him to paint the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, for which he was to receive two hundred gold ducats a year, above all contingent expenses. Benozzo was to get seven ducats per month, and two of his assistants three. They bound themselves to paint four months each year, till the work was completed. On the 2nd of June, 1447, the secretary reported to the deputies that "Fra Giovanni di Pietro . . . of the Order of Preachers, had accepted the invitation to come and paint the new chapel, and that he would arrive in Orvieto on the feast of Corpus Domini, and that he now sought to know what paintings he should execute." It was, therefore, unanimously resolved that he should paint a Final Judgment, in life-size figures: and to show their high appreciation of him, they bestowed on him the title of "Master of Masters," which was only conferred on the most distinguished artists, and which had been given to Gentile da Fabriano, in 1423

This last-named was either a disciple or an imitator of the Angelico. On the 14th of June, Fra Giovanni signed the contract: and as the greater part of that month had gone by, it was agreed that he should paint during the months of July, August, and September.[1] We will now adopt the words of Father Guglielmo della Valle, the historian of the cathedral:—"Fra Giovanni set to work diligently; but he was greatly grieved for the death of Antonio Giovanelli, who fell from a scaffold, and died at his feet. . . . . He was assisted in these paintings by Pietro di Niccolo, and Giovanni di Pietro Orvietans, probably in the ornamental departments; because it is written of the latter that he *painted over Master Fra Giovanni, painter and chief of the Masters;* and thus he continued to work at the ceiling till the 28th of September, of same year; when after having been paid one hundred and three florins for himself and companions, he set out for Rome, and never returned to Orvieto."[2] According to this historian, the Angelico painted the Judge in the act of pronouncing his malediction on the Reprobate, and the beautiful Choir of Prophets that is over the Inferno, which was completed some years afterwards by Luca Signorelli da Cortona. These figures were engraved and published with the rest of the paintings, by the same Father della Valle in his history of that cathedral. Nobody, I believe, has observed that the Christ in this work is a repetition of that which he executed in very small dimensions on the

[1] See Document vi.

[2] F. Della Valle states that a few months after the Angelico's departure from Orvieto it was found necessary to repair the roof of the chapel, through which the rain had entered, to the great injury of his works. The diminution of the sum agreed upon may be accounted for by the fact that, instead of painting for four months, he remained but three in Orvieto.

doors of the armory in the church of the Annunciation at Florence. Here, as in that of the Camaldulese, the Lord of the living and the dead is enthroned in great majesty; and instead of the calm severity which distinguishes His features in the foresaid painting, he represented Him with His right hand raised as it were in awful anger, commanding the wicked to flee from before His face. It is very likely, that Michelangelo, in some respects, copied this figure in his Final Judgment in the Sixtine chapel. It is probable, too, that Buonarrotti not only studied the Judge, as depicted by the Angelico, but also the rest of the work executed by Signorelli, and this will very considerably diminish the admiration with which every one must regard the tremendous terrors of the Judgment in the Sistina; so much so, that this work by Luca, has always appeared to me, both in the beauty of the figures, and the truth of the expression, to be truly stupendous. The boldness and correctness of the design, the management of the nude, and the nobleness of the figures, may be said to be very admirable, and particularly worthy of consideration—as they are the work of an artist of the fifteenth century. But let no one hope to find in Signorelli's "Elect," the divine ecstacy and the aerial forms of the Angelico—let no one hope to be inebriated by that celestial delight that must be felt at sight of these dear images, since such merit belongs to him alone, and no other may ever calculate on attaining it. Signor Rosini, having considered the shortness of the time—one hundred days—and the interval that must have been employed in making the designs, the contours, and putting up the scaffolding, is of opinion that Fra Angelico could not have executed all the work that is attributed to him. He thinks, however, that Christ the Judge was by Benozzo Gozzoli,

and the Choir of Prophets by the Angelico. His reason for this opinion is, that the Choir is much superior to the former work in its grandiose and perfect execution. In the absence of authentic documents, it would be difficult to admit or reject this opinion. I will barely advert, that Fra Giovanni was so expeditious in frescoing, that he could, in a very short time, cover a great superficies with the choicest compositions, a fact which excited the wonder of Vasari, and must ever win the admiration of those who shall see the innumerable frescos that he produced in the convent of San Marco. This illustrious historian of art believes that the choir of angels raising up the cross, which is surrounded by others holding the various instruments of the Passion, was designed by the Angelico. The Virgin is here represented in the midst of the Apostles; as are also the four Doctors of the Church, with the four Founders of the Mendicant Orders. "If the composition," continues Rosini, "rigorously speaking, presents nothing singular, the expression of the heads is most beautiful and varied; and the figure of S. Francis is full of life."[1]

It would now be almost impossible to divine the Angelico's motives for not returning to Orvieto to finish the works he had commenced. Perhaps the painter was overwhelmed with grief for the death of Giovanelli; or it may be that the important works which he had undertaken by command of the Pontiff, would not allow him to satisfy his obligations to the Orvietan cathedral. In fact, he not only painted in the Vatican the histories we have described, and the Deposition from the Cross; but he also, (by the Pope's command,) miniatured some books, which, according to Vasari, were extremely beau-

[1] Storia della Pittura Italiana, Epoca ii. c. v. p. 299.

tiful, and which, at his time of life, must have caused him great labour. He also executed some little pictures for private Roman citizens, for example, the two Final Judgments which are in the Corsini and Fesch galleries, if we may suppose that they were not brought thither from Florence; and particularly the two great paintings that he placed in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, if what Vasari writes be true. He mentions, without telling us the subject, the painting for the grand altar, and an *Annunciation that was near the principal chapel, laid against the wall.* Some of the Roman Guide books, mentioning the Angelico's works, attribute to him the altar-piece of the chapel del Rosario, that of S. Thomas of Aquino, and that of the most holy Annunciation. Giovanni Masselli, in his Notes to Vasari, being misled, probably, by some of these *Guides*, adopted the same opinion. The anonymous writer of the Life of Cardinal Dominici, (which is in MS. in the archives of S. Marco,) attributes to Fra Giovanni Angelico the two paintings of the chapels of the Rosary and S. Thomas Aquino. Another Guide, published in 1842, thinks that the altar-piece of the Annunziata was by Benozzo Gozzoli.[1] Having consulted some of the most distinguished Roman painters, I have ascertained that that church does not possess a single work by the Angelico. But, as to the painting in the chapel of S. Thomas Aquino, Filippino Lippi executed an Annunciation for it, which, in all probability, was subsequently removed to the chapel of this name built by Cardinal Giovanni di Torrecremata. Let us remark, however, that there is reason for supposing that this work was executed by Benozzo Gozzolo; since, besides Our Lady of the Annunciation, he also

[1] Roma compiutamente descritta in vii. Giornate.

painted a portrait of the Cardinal, who is prostrate amongst a number of young females, venerating the Madonna; thus alluding to the charitable foundation of the said Cardinal, which annually gives a dowry to a certain number of girls, either for the purpose of entering convents or getting married;—a foundation that was established whilst Benozzo Gozzoli was in Rome.

The Angelico had now reached his sixty-eighth year. His marvellous works had embellished Florence, Rome, Perugia, Cortona and Fiesole; his name was venerated by the people, by the Medicean Princes, and two Roman Pontiffs. He had witnessed the decline of the ancient and religious school of Giotto, of which he was the last flower: and the rise of another, full of life, of grace, and studious of the True, which was destined to win resplendent glories for Art. Unlike the old Margaritone, who mourned over the fall of the Greek school, our painter, even in his mature years, worshipped the sublimity of Masaccio, nor did he shrink from becoming the disciple of a man to whom, as far as years were concerned, he might have been a master. But while he admired the rare perfection to which art was rapidly approaching in every branch of design, he felt conscious that no theory would ever enable the new school to depict the joys of heaven as he had done, not by the accessories of Art, but by an ardent faith and a glowing charity. I, for my part, believe that no other man shall ever excel him in this respect, unless God Himself reveals to him a glimpse of His transcendent glory. He had now run his career, after having caused Christian Art to beam forth in new light, and leaving to all future ages, in the history of his life, as well as in his paintings, many beautiful moral and religious precepts. On the 18th of March, of the year 1455, he was taken up to

heaven, to contemplate these dear and holy images which he so admirably depicted here on earth. The Pontiff, Nicholas V., who bewailed his departure, caused a marble monument to be erected to his memory in the church of the Minerva, on which he ordered that the effigy of the artist should be sculptured. According to some, the Pope himself wrote the inscription, which was meant to record the ability and the virtues of the painter, as well as the esteem in which the Pontiff held him. It is as follows:—

"Hic. Jacet. Ven. Pictor.
Fr. Jo. de Flor. Ord. P.
M.
C. C. C. C.
L.
V.

Non mihi sit laudi, quod eram velut alter Apelles,
Sed quod lucra tuis (L. pauperibus) omnia, Christe dabam:
Altera nam terris opera extant, altera cœlo
Urbs me Joannem flos tulit Etruriæ."[1]

We will close his life with the eulogy which Vasari has pronounced on him, "Fra Giovanni was a most holy man, and very simple in his habits . . . He shunned all worldly pursuits, and, living a pure and sanctified life, he was as much the friend of the poor whilst here on earth, as I believe his soul to be now in heaven. He painted constantly; nor did he ever wish to produce anything save for the Saints. He might have been wealthy, but he did not care to become so; on the contrary, he was wont to say that true riches consist in being content with little. He might have commanded many, but he did not wish for it, and it was a maxim of his that there is

[1] The term "venerable," applied to the Angelico so soon after his death, appears somewhat remarkable. Leandro Alberti is the first who, as far as I have ascertained, calls him Beato, (Blessed.)

less trouble and less danger of error in being subject to others. It was in his power to have had dignities conferred on him by the friars and others, but he did not esteem them, and he was accustomed to say that he desired no dignity save escaping hell and winning Paradise. And, in fact, what dignity can be compared to that which all religious, nay, all men of every condition, should seek, and which is to be found in God alone and a holy life? He was most gentle and sober, and disengaged himself from the snares of the world by living chastely; and he used to say that persons of his art had need of repose, and should be entirely freed from all interruptions; and that he whose works related to Christ should be always communing with Christ. Never did he exhibit anger amongst his brethren, a fact which to me seems almost incredible; and whensoever he had occasion to admonish his friends, he did so with a gentle smile. Whensoever any one sought works by his pencil, he used to tell them, with incredible amiability, that, if they satisfied his prior, he would not fail them. In a word, this never-to-be sufficiently-lauded father, both in actions and words, was most humble and modest, and, in his paintings, simple and devout; *and the saints that he painted have more of the air and resemblance of saints than these of any other painter.* It was his custom never to retouch or heighten the effect of any of his works, but to leave them just as they came from his pencil, believing, as he used to say, that such was the will of God. Some say that Fra Giovanni never took up pencil without first having recourse to prayer. Whensoever he painted a Crucifixion, the tears streamed down his cheeks, and in the countenances and attitudes of his figures it is easy to perceive the goodness of his soul and his great love of the Christian religion."

It may be pleasing to the reader if we add a few words concerning the portraits of Fra Angelico that exist, or that are thought to be meant for him; for, indeed, most people are anxious to learn from the features of all great men, what may have been the internal workings of their souls. It appears to me, therefore, that the likeness on the monument in the Minerva, should be regarded as the truest, since it is probable that it was taken from a cast after death. This portrait, however, has suffered so much from attrition, that we cannot now very clearly trace his lineaments. According to Rosini and, I believe, Father Guglielmo Della Valle, Luca Signorelli made a likeness of him in his Final Judgment in Orvieto, placing him near himself in the two figures which are on the left of Antichrist; thus wishing to present to the spectator the portraits of the two painters of this tremendous epic. Fra Bartolomeo della Porta, who could not have seen him as he lived many years after him, gives us his portrait in the Final Judgment that he painted in the hospital of S. Maria Nuova in Florence, whilst he was yet a secular; and this was engraved by Vasari, in the second edition of his works published by Giunti, Florence, 1568; the best of all, however, is that by Signor Raffaello Buonajuti. There is one by Carlo Dolce, in the Academy of Design, at Florence, which if it does not present the true lineaments of the Angelico, charms all eyes by its sweetness and religious expression. Hitherto, the convent of S. Marco possessed one coloured, I know not by what hand; and it was in the cell of S. Antonino. The friars of that convent very wisely transformed the humble cell inhabited by the holy Archbishop, into a Pinacoteca, wherein you might behold the likenesses of all these religious whose learning or sanctity reflected honour on the congregation of San Marco. This was a splendid eulogium

and a solemn monument that attested the glory of the Saint to whom, in great measure, the restoration of the Dominican Order was due. The portraits were as follows:—Giovanni Dominici—the Cardinal—the Archbishop—S. Antonino—the Venerable Lorenzo da Ripafratta—Fra Giovanni Angelico—the Blessed Pietro Cappucci di Città di Castello—the Blessed Antonio Neyrot the Martyr—the Blessed Costanzo da Fabriano—the Venerable Father Santi Schiattesi, &c.; of all of which there only remains now that of S. Antonino, and of the Venerable Father Lorenzo da Ripafratta, who, it would seem, were destined to represent their illustrious compeers. The convent of Fiesole, which counted the two brothers of Mugello amongst its earliest inmates, and who embellished it by their genius, placed the portrait of the Angelico with these of other great men of the Order, illustrious for learning and sanctity, in their refectory, with the following inscription:—

"Beatus Joannes pictor, moribus et pencillo
Angelici cognomen jure merito. H. C. F."[1]

This portrait no longer exists.

It now remains for us to mention those whom the Angelico educated in painting, or who having adopted his manner, may be regarded as his imitators. Vasari enumerates four, amongst whom, however, there is no Dominican—they are the following:—Benozzo Gozzoli, Zanobi Strozzi, Gentile da Fabriano, and a certain Domenico di Michelino. Of the first there can be no doubt, as there is distinct mention of him in the contract regarding the Orvietan cathedral. Of the second no work remains at present, or it may be that his paintings, on account of the similarity of style, were attributed to

[1] Hujus Conventus Filius.

Benozzo Gozzoli, or to the Angelico. Lanzi enumerates Strozzi, amongst the dilettanti; Vasari adds that he executed pictures on canvas and in panel, for all Florence, and the said biographer has given a series of his paintings; but that by Baldinucci, is still better. Domenico di Michelino was altogether forgotten, even by Lanzi, who records an abundance of mediocre painters. At last the celebrated Doctor Gaye, a few years back, discovered a precious document, which gives us to understand that the picture in S. Maria del Fiore, of Dante crowned with Laurel, and presenting his Divine Poem to Florence, (a sort of reparation made by the city to the grandest of its Bards,) was not the work of Orgagna, as had been commonly believed, but of Domenico Michelino.[1] But far superior to all these were Benozzo, and Gentile da Fabriano. The first of these excelled all his contemporaries in landscape, and equalled Filippino Lippi in the variety and beauty of his edifices. Second to none in the poetry of art, he has left in the Ricardi palace, Florence, and in the Campo Santo of Pisa, such proof of his power, as is sufficient *to frighten a legion of painters.* (Vasari.) In my opinion he imitated the Angelico in the lightness and transparency of his tints, as well as in graceful and devout expression. He is not so noble, but perhaps more imaginative, and he is inferior to him in draperies, as are most painters of his period.

On the authority of Lanzi and Father Della Valle, many doubted whether Gentile da Fabriano should be classed amongst the disciples of the Angelico, alleging that Gentile was actually painting in Orvieto, in 1417; and that he was then called "*Master of Masters.*" But Rosini very wisely adverts that, 1417, is either an error

[1] Carteggio inedito, v. i.

of type, or a mistake of F. Della Valle; since, in another passage of his book, he states that Gentile went there in 1423.[1] Amico Ricci, in a very learned work on the artists of the Marches of Ancona, thinks, that Gentile da Fabriano learned the rudiments of the art from Alegretto di Nuzio, and that he studied to perfect himself under the Angelico in Florence.[2] We have nothing to oppose to this opinion. It may be more probable, however, that Fabriano, having heard of the Angelico's arrival in Foligno, proceeded thither to see his paintings, and obey his precepts. Michelangiolo said of Gentile, that his style was like his name. In the expression of his heads, which exhibit all the finish of the miniaturist, he is superior to Benozzo; and if I were to judge by the Adoration of the Magi that is in the gallery of the Florentine Academy, I would say that he is inferior to Gozzoli in correctness of design. His highest encomium, however, is, that he educated, in Venice, Jacopo Bellini, the Founder and Father of that school, which produced Giorgione and Tiziano.

1 Storia della Pitturia, Ep. ii. v. iii.

2 Memorie Storiche delle Arti, etc., Macerata, 1834.

SUMMARY OF THE PAINTINGS

NOW EXISTING BY

FRA GIOVANNI ANGELICO.

PERUGIA.

Church of S. Dominic—In the little choir of the Religious: The Blessed Virgin on a throne, with her Son in her arms; and on the sides two panels, in one of which is S. John Baptist, and S. Catherine V. M; and in the other S. Dominic and S. Nicholas di Bari. In the sacristy: Twelve little pictures of twelve Saints; a panel, with two histories of S. Nicholas di Bari; and two panels of the Annunciation and the Angel Gabriel.

CORTONA.

Church of S. Dominic—On the façade of the church in fresco: The Blessed Virgin, with her Son in her arms, and on the sides two Dominican Saints; in the little arch: the Four Evangelists. In the church, in the lateral chapel: the B. V. seated on a throne, with some Angels and Saints at the sides. Church del Gesù: An Annunciation, and two gradini; one a history of S. Dominic, the other of the B. V. M.

FIESOLE.

Church of S. Dominic—In the choir (on panel): the B. V. seated on a throne, surrounded by Angels and Saints. In the refectory: a fresco of the Crucifixion, with S. John and the B. V. on the sides. In the chapter-room (fresco): The B. V. with her Son in her arms, between S. Dominic and S. Thomas of Aquino, figures life-size. Church of S. Jerom: The B. V., with the holy Doctor and other Saints (v. Montalembert.)

FLORENCE.

S. Marco (in fresco)—The Crucifixion in the first cloister, with five lunettes in half figures. The Crucifixion in the chapter-room, and portraits of illustrious Dominicans. In the convent, with the exception of two, all the cells of the upper dormitory, in number thirty-two, and three histories on the exterior walls. In the dormitory called il Giovanato, some Crucifixes.

S. Maria Novella—Three Reliquaries. Academy of Design, Gallery of large pictures: No. 15. The Deposition from the Cross. Gallery of little pictures: Nos. 14 and 20, two little pictures, representing the Blessed Albertus Magnus, and S. Thomas Aquino disputing ex cathedra ; No 30, the B. V., with her Son in her arms ; No. 39, S. Cosimo, healing an Infirm; No. 43, a Deposition from the Cross; 44, the Last Judgment; 45, the Burial of the five Martyrs—i. e., SS. Cosmas and Damian, and their three brothers; 51, a Pietà, with the instruments of the Passion; 56, eight panels or doors of the armory of the Church of the Annunciation, with thirty-five histories of the life of our Lord. Saloon: 14, the B. V. M. surrounded by Saints ; 15, a similar panel; 18, the B. V. between two Angels and some Saints. Gallery degli Uffizj: A grand tabernacle, with the B. V. on a throne, and some Saints ; a panel with the B. V. and some Saints, now in the Gallery of the Palazzo Pitti. Tuscan School: The Coronation of the B. V. and the six little panels—i. e., the Adoration of the Magi; two histories of S. Mark ; the Espousals and Transit of the B. V. M.; and the Nativity of S. John the Baptist.

ROME.

Vatican—The chapel of Pope Nicholas V. painted in fresco, with histories of S. Stephen and S. Laurence, Martyrs. Gallery: two little panels of the life of S. Nicholas di Bari. Galleria Valentini : a portion of a gradino, belonging, perhaps, to the picture that is now in the choir of S. Domenico at Fiesole. Galleria Corsini: a Final Judgment. Fesch Gallery: a Final Judgment.

ORVIETO.

Cathedral.—The ceiling of the chapel of the B. V: A great fresco, with the upper portion of a Final Judgment, finished by Luca Signorelli.

MONTEFALCO.

Church of the Franciscans—Professor Rosini says it contains some works by the Angelico, but he does not mention their subject.

PARIS.

Louvre—The picture of the Coronation of the B. V. M, and a gradino, with passages from the life of S. Dominic.

BERLIN.

Royal Museum—S. Dominick and S. Francis embracing, (v. Montalembert, "Du Catholicisme et du Vandalisme.") A Final Judgment, (Fortoul de l'Art en Allemagne.)

CHAPTER IX.

NOTICES OF FRA BARTOLOMEO CORADINI OF URBINO, COMMONLY CALLED FRA CARNOVALE.

If we were to depend on Vasari, Baldinucci, and Lanzi, for a memoir of Bartolomeo Coradini, a very excellent painter of the city of Urbino, we should be content with the following very meagre notices. Towards the close of the fifteenth century, there flourished in Urbino a painter, vulgarly called Fra Carnovale, either on account of his lively temperament, or, perhaps, because his features were very gay and cheerful. He painted an altar-piece for the church of the Franciscans in his native city; and Bramante Lazzari and the divine Raffaello studied the works of this cheerful friar in their youth. Thanks, however to the diligent and indefatigable researches of the learned Father Luigi Pungileoni of the Minor Conventuals, whose demise has evoked the sorrow of every lover of art, we are now enabled to know more of the life and works of this Dominican painter. In the historical eulogy of Giovanni Santi di Urbino, father of Raffael, Pungileoni has inserted a long letter, in which he details all that he was able to collect regarding Coradini. This letter he addressed to the Marquis Antaldi, a most profound virtuoso;[1] and we will enrich our pages with it, barely supplying some few observations which could

[1] Elogio Storico di Giovanni Santi, painter and poet, father of Raffael, of Urbino, by Vincenzo Guerrini, 1822, 1 vol. in 8vo.

not have come within the narrow limits of an epistle:—

"TO THE MARQUIS RAIMONDI ANTALDI, PATRICIAN, AND GONFALONIERE OF URBINO.

"The love with which you cultivate the fine arts, has induced me to send you such notices as I have been able to collect respecting Bartolommeo, the Dominican painter, son of Giovanni di Bartoli Coradini and Michelina, of whose family I am ignorant. Gifted with no ordinary talent, he devoted himself to the study of sacred literature and art. He was far from being mediocre, and he would have acquired greater reputation in painting, if the duties of the cloister and the cure of a parish, (he was the Curè of Castello Cavallino,) had not often obliged him to abandon the pencil. Various notices extracted from the book of the confraternity of Santa Maria della Misericordia, induce me to believe that he was a disciple of Fra Jacopo Veneto, his confrere.[1] Our gratitude is due to the man who compiled the Memoirs regarding the church and suburban convent of S. Bernardino, from which the learned Father Thomas of the Reformed Minorites, has kindly transcribed for me, the following fragment:—'About this period, (1472,) Fra Bartolomeo, called Fra Carnovale, painted the picture for the great altar: the Madonna, is the portrait of the Duchess

[1] Loc. cit. p. 47. In a book of the Archives of S. Croce, written between 1368 and 1420, we read, "July 21st, to Fra Giacomo di Venezia, of the Order of S. Dominic, two florins, as an instalment of what he is to receive for painting the new audience chamber;" here we find another Dominican artist, hitherto unknown to Art-History. In the Annali del Convento di S. Dominico in Bologna, we have an entry dated 1434, concerning some pieces of land, the usus-fructus of which belonged to Fra Antonio, a *Bolognese painter*. We hope to be able to discover some painting or memoir of these two Dominican artists, Fra Giacomo di Venezia and Fra Antonio di Bologna.

Battista Sforza, wife of Duke Frederic, and the infant that is on the Madonna's knees, is the portrait (taken from life) of the baby then born to the Duke, of the said Battista,' etc. I entirely agree with your brother, who says in his unpublished notices of the artists of Pesaro and Urbino, that the picture was executed between the 24th of January (Guidobaldo's birth-day) and the 6th of July, on which day the second wife of Duke Federico departed this life. Whatsoever may have been the date of this painting, which is now in the Pinacoteca, at Milan—you who have had time to examine it, can readily inform me whether we should trust to Stefano Ticozzi, who lauds it for its colouring, but not for the drapery of the figures, or the architecture, in which he discovers all the imperfections of the period; or to Lanzi, who describes the architecture as beautiful. The learned Count Montevecchio, in his unpublished memoirs, reconciles both opinions, by observing that, it was very difficult to shake off the Gothic dust, which was more the vice of the times, than of the painter. To him, I am indebted for various reflections on the works of Santi and Viti, and I will not fail to notify to the public, the weight of my obligations. A sketch on wood, believed to have been by the same hand that produced the altar-piece, is now carefully preserved in S. M. delle Grazie, of the Reformed Franciscans, near Sinigaglia. It represents the Infant sleeping on the Mother's bosom, and Duke Federico with his arms crossed on his breast; but it is deficient in perspective, and wants more than one personage of the Feltresca family. I am tempted to introduce to your notice here, another work from his pencil, now existing in S. Maria della Bella, but I abstain from doing so because Cardinal Barberini, the Legate, took it away; and gave in lieu of it an excellent picture

by Claudio Ridolfi, which has also disappeared. I will rather mention the painting on wood, now preserved in the Staccoli Gallery, which is attributed to him by the Professor Michele Dolci, in his manuscript memoirs. The head of the Madonna, who is seated in the centre of the painting, within a niche, is well painted, and expressive; and amongst the other figures, that of an old man, with a white beard, reading a book, is elaborated with taste approaching perfection. Occupied with his pastoral duties, he had not much time for his pencil. In my opinion, want of leisure caused him, in 1456, to refund to the bank of Lucca Zaccagna, a sum which had been advanced to him by the Guild of Corpus Domini, for a picture which they had ordered, as appears from the following entry in Latin:—'Whereas, it was agreed between the members of the Guild of Corpus Domini of Urbino, and Fra Bartolomeo, of the Dominicans, that the latter should paint a certain picture, for said Fraternity, and whereas, the said Fra Bartolomeo received in part-payment, forty gold ducats, of which he expended seven for colours, and as said parties absolved said Fra Bartolomeo from this agreement, . . . because Baldo, the goldsmith, promised to make good the remaining thirty-three gold ducats,' etc. Permit me to give you another notice, though it does not regard the painter. In the Communal Archives of this city, there are various entries regarding wax oblations—and, dated August, 22, 1461, is the following:—'Item to the Venerable Bartolomeo, Pastor of S. Cassiano di Cavallino, four florins, for four pounds of wax, painted, . . . this sum was given to the said Pastor, for thus commemorating the victory which his Lordship (probably the Duke of Urbino) had, on the festival, when he defeated Sigismondo di Malatesta.' I might add much more anent this artist, were I

not afraid of tiring you, but let me inform you, that if you think, with Lanzi, that he died in 1478, you are mistaken.[1] The Archives of Urbino, ad. ann. 1481, tell us that amongst other witnesses, summoned for some legal proceeding was, 'the venerable man and Pastor Fra Bartolomeo, of S. Cassiano Cavallino;' and in the book of the Confraternity we read: (ad. ann. 1482,) 'To Fra Bartolomeo, Archpriest of Cavallino.' Again, under date, January 1st, 1484: 'To Fra Bartolomeo, as above, for the poor.' It would appear that he died in 1488, and was succeeded by a certain Baldissare, whose baptismal name I have not discovered. I would desire, my most amiable Lord, to tender you all my services, if they be worth anything; accept, therefore, my most anxious desire to exhibit my profound respect and esteem," etc.

To these observations of the learned Franciscan, I have little to add; and I will confine myself to a few remarks on the picture now existing in the church of S. Bernardino, of which I can only speak from the engraving given in his History of Italian Painting, by Professor Rosini.[2] In this he represents the Virgin seated on a throne, having on her knees the Divine Infant, (nude,) who is in profound sleep. The features, and whole attitude of the Madonna, are expressive of prayer and adoration. At either side he places two Saints, on one line, according to the style of the Giotto-school; and they are, S. John Baptist, S. Jerom, S. Francis, and another Saint, whose name I cannot determine. Before the throne, kneeling, and clothed in

[1] Lazzari, Father Lanzi, and even Professor Rosini have erred in stating that this painter died in 1478.

[2] Tav. XCIII.

armour, is the Duke of Urbino, in the act of imploring for himself and family, (whom he places behind the throne,) the protection of Mary. Every body praises the beauty of the heads, and the portraits of the Duke and his Children; which are so life-like, that they will bear comparison with the best productions of Pietro Perugino. We cannot say so much, however, of the composition, and particularly as regards the manner in which he disposes the Ducal family. Instead of hiding them behind the throne, he should have grouped them before it, as did many painters of that and the following century. In my opinion, Coradini was influenced by the traditions of the old masters, of which there are many traces in his works. The drapery is far from being graceful in its folds, and is, likewise, very scanty; and as to the nude of the Infant, it is feeble in design. Despite these defects, common to nearly all the painters of that age, this painting reveals an artist gifted with genius; and worthy of being classed amongst the foremost of the Roman school of the fifteenth century. Lanzi thinks him superior to Giovanni Santi; and Father Pungileoni suspects that the latter did not fail to avail himself of the precepts and mannerism of Fra Carnovale, who was his senior.[1] Three of the most distinguished of the painters of Urbino studied his works. Vasari states, of Bramante, that "whilst yet a mere boy, he studied

[1] History of Painting, Rom. School, 1st Epoch. "But the most distinguished of them all was Fra Bartolomeo Corradini, of Urbino, the Dominican called Fra Carnovale. His pictures are defective in perspective, and retain, in the drapery, the *dryness* of his age; but the portraits are so strongly expressed, that they seem to live and speak; the architecture is beautiful, the colours bright, and the expression of the heads is noble and unaffected. It has been ascertained that Bramante and Raffaello studied them as there was nothing superior to them then in Urbino."

many of the paintings of Coradini, commonly called Fra Carnovale, of Urbino, who executed the altar-piece of Santa Maria della Bella, in Urbino.[1] As to Santi, all agree with Pungileoni; but as to Raffaello, the assertions of Lanzi and Rosini, are nothing more than conjectures. And, indeed, the recent works executed by Piero della Francesca, about this period, for Duke Federico, of Urbino, all of which were conducted in the style of the miniaturists, with little historical figures, could not have been of great assistance to the painters we have recorded, who desired to emancipate themselves from the ancient methods, and, as it were, to enter on a larger field; whereas, in Fra Carnovale, I think, we can discover a grander style, as though he represented, in his own person, Sandro Botticelli, Andrea del Castagno, Roselli, etc., and the other Florentines of this period.

A person, whom I venerate, and who is skilled in arts and literature, suspects that the picture, now in the Pinacotea of Milan, should be attributed to Piero della Francesca, instead of Corradini. His reason for this opinion is, that he found in many of the works of the former, all the portraits of the Duke and of his family. He evidently alludes to these now in the Gallery of the Uffizj at Florence. Nevertheless, it is but a conjecture; since, irrespective of the ancient Memoirs of Father Pungileoni, which remove all doubt as to the author of

[1] History of Painting, v. 3, Epoch, 2nd., ch. VIII. How very little Baldinucci knew this artist, appears from these, his own words: "This painter came from Raffaello's school, and became excellent in perspective." . . . and further on—"This was that Fra Bartolomeo da Urbino who taught the art of design and painting to Bramante di Castel Durante, and who lived about 1520."—V. Decenn. III. Part 1, Sec. IV. How could a painter of Raffael's school be master to Bramante, and flourish about 1520? Add to this the eulogium on his perspective, whereas all his pictures are most defective in this particular.

that picture, it is easy to suppose that Piero della Francesca, during his residence in the Feltresca Court, may have designed and coloured the portraits of Duke Federico and his family. This fact could not be an argument for ascribing to him the said altar-piece. Moreover, admitting what Ticozzi and Lanzi state of the defective perspective of the temple, that forms the back ground of the painting, how could we suppose that Piero della Francesca, who was so great a master in this science, could have been its author? But let this suffice regarding Fra Carnovale, till we discover other materials to illustrate his life and works.

CHAPTER X.

Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, the Veronese Painter.

Leaving the declivity of the Apennines, and proceeding along the smiling banks of the Adige and Mincio, we find amongst the painters educated in the school of Andrea Mantegna the Padovan, Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, whose name, with these of many others, should have been buried in oblivion, had not Vasari recorded it to posterity. Bartolommeo del Pozzo, concluding the Life of Francesco Monsignori, adopts Vasari's words in relation to Gerolamo:[1] and Scipione Maffei simply states that Francesco had two brothers who cultivated painting.[2] Father Serafino Razzi is not more copious than the authors we have quoted, and, to spare himself trou-

[1] Vite dei Pittori Scultori e Architetti Veronesi. [2] Verona illustrata.

ble, he merely quoted Vasari. This uncertainty and poverty of materials will not allow us to determine precisely the year of Gerolamo's birth, which Razzi says was 1440 (according to him he died, aged sixty, at the beginning of 1500); whereas Vasari, speaking of his brother, affirms that 1445 was the year in which he was born, and that he died in 1519. This discrepancy precludes all possibility of reasonable conjecture, and indeed these two historians are very heedless of accuracy in matters of dates. The country of our Friar was Verona, and his father, Alberto Monsignori, was a man in easy circumstances. He had three children, Gerolamo, Cherubino, and Francesco, but I have not ascertained which of them was the eldest; it appears, that the last-named survived Gerolamo for a few years. As Alberti took great delight in painting, and cultivated it, not as a means to make out his livelihood, but to shun idleness, he determined that his three sons should be educated in the art, and he himself taught them the first rudiments. Subsequently, finding that Francesco had exquisite taste and a ready hand, and that Gerolamo, who was of a very mild disposition, equalled his brother in talent, he resolved to provide them with the ablest master he could provide. What redounds more to the praise of the father, was the earnestness with which he laboured to instil into the minds of his children the holy fear of God, both by precept and example. Nor did the result disappoint the hopes he had preconceived; for both Gerolamo and Francesco led a most holy life, the former in the cloisters of the Preaching-Friars, and the latter amongst the Minorites. As to Francesco, we need only transcribe what Vasari has recorded of him:—"Francesco was a man of holy life, and a hater of every vice, and he never

could be induced to execute lascivious works, though importuned by Francesco Gonzaga, of Mantua—all his brothers resembled him in goodness."[1]

Such splendid conduct as this, in a most corrupt age, is well calculated to console these high-minded artists who attach more value to a moral idea than to the disgusting *nude;* and who, despite most prave examples, know how to accomplish the object of their art without contaminating their pencils with indecent productions.

The man at this period in highest esteem was the painter Andrea Mantegna, of Padua, the disciple of Squarcione; who, having left his own country, and Venice, where he married the daughter of Jacopo Bellini, accepted the invitation of the Marquess Lodovico Gonzaga, and settled himself in Mantua. Here were laid the foundations of the Lombard school, which the transcendent genius of Lionardo da Vinci soon raised to that eminence which is known to all. Alberto Monsignori thought, however, that his sons required an able teacher, and that Verona had no one who could compete with Mantegna; and indeed few of that period excelled him in fertility or elegance, and certainly none in the correctness of design. He therefore sent Francesco and Gerolamo to study under him. As to Francesco, there can be no doubt that Mantegna was his master; and of Gerolamo, we may readily affirm the same; for he not only followed Mantegna in his first manner, but Lanzi assures us that he should be numbered amongst the *Mantegneschi* painters.[2] Cherubino, on the other hand, applied himself to miniaturing, and he succeeded

[3] Vite degli uomini illustri.

[4] History of Painting, Mantuan School, Epoch 1st.

so admirably in this art, that Vasari terms him "*a most beautiful writer and miniaturist.*" When and where Gerolamo took the Dominican habit is not recorded by any one. Without knowing it, save by hearsay, he was a most faithful imitator of Fra Giovanni Angelico. Though the offspring of respectable parents, such was his humility, that he entered amongst the lay-brothers. Prayer, seclusion, and an indifference to all earthly goods, were his grand characteristics. Vasari has given us some particulars of his life; and we will narrate them in the words of this writer:—"Fra Gerolamo was a most simple person, and altogether detached from mundane pursuits; and staying in the country in a farm belonging to the convent, in order to avoid all interruptions, he kept the money which he earned by his works, and which he expended on the purchase of colours, in a box without a lid, which he hung up in the centre of his cell, so that any one, who so wished, might come and make use of it. To avoid all trouble about his daily food, he cooked, each Monday, a pot of beans, which sufficed him throughout the week. At length, when Mantua was smitten by the plague, and when every body fled, Fra Gerolamo, motived by charity, never abandoned the sick Fathers, but, on the contrary, tended them with his own hands. Thus, not shrinking from sacrificing his life to God, he caught the contagion, and died at the age of sixty, regretted by all who knew him."

As a painter, Vasari styles him mediocre; but, speaking of his works, he raises them above mediocrity. He painted much for his convent in Mantua; and amongst the works he produced in that place is the altar-piece of the chapel del Rosario, and in the refectory a very beautiful "Last Supper," and a Crucifixion, which death

prevented him from finishing. In his own country, in the convent of S. Anastasia, he frescod a Madonna, S. Remigius, the bishop, and S. Anastasia, the martyr; of which nearly all the figures have been destroyed. In the second cloister of the same convent, over the second door, in the little arch, he painted the B.V., S. Dominic, and S. Thomas of Aquino. At the latter period of his life, when the fame of Lionardo da Vinci was resounding not only through Lombardy, but throughout all Italy, Fra Gerolamo abandoned the study and imitation of Mantegna, and began to follow the manner of Vinci. This proves that Monsignori's genius was not swayed by prejudices, for, even in his old age, which is almost always tenacious of the first methods, he desired to strike out into a new and more difficult path. Lionardo had been invited to paint in Milan by Duke Lodovico, called il Moro, in 1494, or, as others think, as early as 1482. It must be borne in mind that our Fra Gerolamo, having left Mantua or Verona, where he usually dwelt, proceeded to the convent delle Grazie, in Milan, when that bizarre genius, Matteo Bandello was there, and Vinci was painting the marvellous Supper, that Lanzi truly describes as one of the most beautiful paintings that ever came from the hand of man. Here, the precepts and example of such a great master must have been of the greatest service to him; and in order to make an essay in the *Leonardesque* style, he painted a little S. John, and a woman laughing, which, in the days of Vasari, were preserved in the mint at Milan, and in which many recognise that truthfulness and grace peculiar to the great master. But, above all his paintings, that which won for him most praise, was a most beautiful copy of the Supper, that Vinci had frescod in the convent delle Grazie, which he must have executed between 1498 and

1499, in which year Lionardo left Milan, then beseiged by the French. The Benedictine monks of Mantua entrusted Monsignori with this work, for they knew well how splendid was the original by Lionardo, and how faithfully our Friar imitated him. This painting was of the same dimensions as the original. We are not able to determine exactly the year in which he executed this copy, but supposing that he died in 1500, as Father Razzi says, it must necessarily have been finished in 1499. As this was the first copy of Lionardo's great work, so was it, likewise, the most excellent of the many. As to the original, it very soon became quite *blackened*, so much so, that in the time of Armennini, *i.e.* fifty years after it was painted, it was already half destroyed; and Vasari, who saw it in 1566, affirms that it was in such sad condition, that it seemed like a *dazzling blot:* "and," continues Vasari, "the piety of this good Father, (Fra Gerolamo Monsignori,) will always bear testimony to Lionardo's abilities."[1]

Lanzi, who probably had seen the copy which the Veronese Friar made, writes that some regarded it as the best ever executed of that miracle of art; and Vasari says it was so beautifully finished, that it struck him with astonishment.[2] The Benedictine monks, for whom it

[1] Life of *Gerolamo da Carpi* in fine.

[2] In the Milanese edition of Vasari's Lives, published 1809, there is an elenchus of the copies of the Supper executed by illustrious painters: that of Fra Gerolamo is marked the eighteenth; and it is there stated of Gerolamo that he studied Lionardo, and imitated him excellently. The first in the series is one executed by Lomazzo, in 1561, for the Observantines della Pace. I do not know whether the annotator followed the order of time or merit; but I will observe that in the first case that if Monsignori is anterior by sixty-two years; and in the second, that if the original was in the condition described by Vasari, I do not see how Lomazzo could have produced a faithful copy of it. Lanzi, and many along with him, affirm that Gerolamo's was by far the best.

was painted, at first placed it in their refectory in the convent of Mantua, and then in the library, but it was sold at the beginning of the present century, and removed to France.[1] After having finished this work, it would appear that Monsignori returned to Mantua, where he had scarcely arrived, when the Dominicans of that city requested him to paint that Crucifixion, which, as has been said, death prevented him from finishing. We will not place Fra Gerolamo amongst the most illustrious painters of the Lombard and Venetian school, but we think he was above mediocrity; and even though he did not equal his brother Francesco, it appears to us that he should be classed amongst the most happy imitators of Mantegna and Vinci, which is no trifling encomium. Every one who respects virtue will venerate this artist, whose whole life reflected honour on art.

[1] Signor Mariette has written the history of Lionardo's "Supper;" and it will be found in the second vol. of the Lettere Pittoriche, No. 84. We will not close the life of Gerolamo without a few observations on the original painting. At a time when every one thought it was irreparably lost, the Superior of that convent (and I cannot be his apologist) caused the wall in the under part of the picture to be sawed through, in order to construct a window for the convenience of the friars. Subsequently in the year 1726, Michael Angelo Bellotti, the painter, proposed to restore it; and the religious, flattering themselves that this chef-dœuvre might be preserved, gladly embraced the offer, and gave the said artist five hundred crowns for his trouble. The Abate Carlo Bianconi, in his Milan Guide, is too severe on the Dominicans, for the first and second of these doings, as both resulted badly. But those who are wont to measure the merit of actions, according to the good intention, will not, I trust, blame them for the infelicitous termination of all these attempts.

CHAPTER XI.

Father Domenico Emanuele Maccarj, the Genoese Painter.

Only one Ligurian, and he a mediocre painter, shall figure in these Memoirs; for, indeed, the religious of another institute, and another district, were far superior to the Dominican artists in that Republic. There was, first, a certain Fra Stefano da Milano, I know not of what order, who flourished about the beginning of the sixteenth century. There were also three Carmelites, Fra Gerolamo and Fra Giovanni da Brescia, and a Fra Lorenzo Moreno, whom Lanzi describes as a good frescoist. Simone da Carnuli, of the Reformed Minors, was a Genoese, and very able in perspective. But eminent above them all was Fra Bernardo Strozzi, by some called the *Cappucine*, and by others *the Priest*, who was such a splendid painter that he may be said to have divided the laurels with the best of the Venetian masters. Our Maccarj, who was unknown to Lanzi, Ratti, Soprani, and, in fact, to all the historians of the Genoese school, is indebted to the diligence of Father Spotorno the Barnabite, for obtaining a very distinguished position in the same. But he has shared the fate of many of his confreres, for the notices of his life were lost; and of all his works, only one picture has survived him.

The district of Pigna, on the confines of Piemonte, was the birth-place of Fra Emanuele Maccarj; and this humble region has been honoured in our times as the natal soil of a most distinguished antiquarian, the Abate

Fea. Of his parents, the year of his birth, or even of his death, we have no authentic documents. We readily adopt the opinion of the historian of Ligurian Literature, who states that our Domenico Emanuele learned the art in Taggia, from Corrado the German, and that his co-disciple was Lodovico Brea di Nizza, whom Lanzi, without any reason, calls the founder of the Genoese school.[1] Giusto di Allemagna had a much better title to this designation. This was the artist who executed the fresco of the Annunciation in the convent of S. Maria di Castello in Genoa, A.D. 1451, and who, in all probability, was master to that Corrado who educated Brea and Maccarj in Taggia. This, however, should not be understood in any sense derogatory to the other national painters, who were either the contemporaries of Giusto, or preceded him, and who claim to be the founders of the Ligurian school. The registry of the Genoese painters, (recently discovered by the learned Barnabite, Father Spotorno, who was the early and honoured instructor of the writer of these pages) induces us to believe that this high merit should not be attributed to the ultramontanes. Where or when Maccarj took the Dominican habit has baffled all our researches; it appears certain, however, that he was a priest, and affiliated to the convent of S. Maria della Misericordia in Taggia. This was one of the convents that had embraced the reform which was being introduced into the Order, since in all the ancient memoirs it is called *Conventus Observantiæ*. We desire that particular stress should be laid on this remark, *for wheresoever the regular discipline prevailed in the Dominican cloisters, there were always to be found the most eminent artists and scholars.* The blessed Angelico, his brother,

[1] Storia Letteraria della Liguria, Geneva, 1826, vol. 4.

Fra Bartolomeo, Fra Paolino, Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, all belonged to the *reformed* convents of Tuscany and Lombardy. By Father Domenico Emanuele Maccarj, we have only the altar-piece of the chapel of S. Peter, Martyr, in the church of his institute in Taggia: a church which David Bertolotti justly termed a rich Pinacoteca of the paintings of the fifteenth century; as it was embellished with these by Lodovico Brea, Corrado di Allemagna, Maccarj, and others.[1] Maccarj also painted a Crucifixion, with S. Dominic and Catherine V. M. at either side, and at foot of the Holy Rood S. Peter, Martyr, and St. Jerom. It would now be difficult to judge of the merits of this work, as the chronicle of the convent tells us that a gang of desperadoes made an incursion into the district for the purpose of plundering, and hacked the picture with hatchets, the traces of which are discernible even now. Far worse than this was the outrage perpetrated on it by an unworthy priest, whom heaven's vengeance suddenly and severely chastised.[2] We do not know precisely in what year Maccarj began to paint it, but it appears to have been after 1522. We are led to believe this by the last will and testament of Domenico Oddi, of Taggia, dated January, 21st of that year, in which he devised to the chapel of S. Peter, Martyr, in the church of the Dominicans, all his property, together with twenty-five ducats to defray the expense of the painting, which was subsequently executed by Father Domenico Emanuele, as manifestly appears from said chronicle. For this notice I am indebted to the kind-

[1] Viaggio nella Liguria Marittima di Davide Bartolotti, Torino, 1834, vol. I.

[2] V. Document, ad finem.

ness of the Canon Vincenzo Lotti, of Taggia, who is a distinguished investigator of his country's annals.

It may be objected to us that a painter who flourished in 1522 should be placed amongst the artists of the sixteenth century, rather than amongst the Quattrocentisti; but we will take leave to observe that in the history of art, along with years, we are bound to consider style and method; and that of Maccarj, in the judgment of many, is peculiar to the latter and not to the former. This consideration shall serve as a rule to us as we proceed in these pages. Here end the very meagre notices which we have been able to collect regarding Father Emanuel. Perhaps we may one day light upon some memoir or work of his which will be calculated to make us appreciate him still more, and thus fill up the void which Ratti and Soprani have left in the Pictorial History of Liguria.

CHAPTER XII.

Fra Francesco Colonna, the Venetian Architect, author of the Art-Romance, entitled The Dream of Polifilo.

The fifteenth century which has enriched these memoirs with so many able artists, has not, as yet, presented to us any cultivator of the first of the three Sister-Arts—I mean Architecture. But happily we are now enabled to narrate the life of one who, with Leon Battista Alberti, and Brunellesco, was instrumental in restoring the classic eurythmy of the Greeks and Romans to Italy. So lovingly did the Preaching-Friars cultivate this art, that its destinies seem to have been linked with theirs, and wheresoever civilization progressed, we are sure to find

them setting the seal of their genius on the movement. Hence, it is, that Gothic architecture, in its two last and most splendid phases, revives memories of the many architects of S. Maria Novella in Florence; whilst the Renaissance reminds us of two Venetian writers, and at the same time most able architects and antiquarians—Fra Francesco Colonna, and Fra Giocondo. Of the second we will have occasion to speak in the following volume. But should any one seek to know why we have divided two artists who exercised the same art, and were contemporaries, we will answer that the work which won for Colonna the name of a great architect, belongs to the last periods of the fifteenth century; whereas, Fra Giocondo designed and constructed many splendid edifices in the golden age of Leo X.

It is really wonderful that a friar who consecrated all his days, studies, and writings to the glory and advancement of the imitative arts, should, in progress of time, have fallen into such oblivion, and that his name should be unknown not only to people of other countries, but even to his fellow-citizens. In fact the learned researches of many able writers did not suffice to restore his memory to the veneration of men.[1] His destiny was like that of many others, who either wrote on Art, or otherwise

[1] How very little Colonna was known to the Venetian historians, even to those of his own Order, appears from the brief notice of Fathers Echard and Quietif. "Fr. Franciscus Columna Venetus, inter viros in oratoria hac aetate præstantes laudatur a. Leandro, fol. 154, 6, et de eo sic. habet:—In quodam libro materno sermone edito, litteraturam et varium ac multiplex ingenium suum præsefert." Nescio qui Alberico venit in mentem in suis scriptoribus Venetis, ut librum litteraturam auctoris arguentem ut habet Leander, verteret in volumen variarum epistolarum eruditum, nam opus ipse se vidisse non indicat. Albericum tamen excipiunt Altamura, ad 1489 et Rovetta, ad 1493. Mihi donec lux major affulserit Leandro æquali standum visum est. Script. Ord. Prædicat, v. 2, tom. 35 ad 1517.

helped to advance it. Is not the Treatise on Painting by the Monk Theophilus, so rare in Italy, that few know anything more of it than what they have been able to learn in the fragments given to us by writers on Art? Is it not true that we are indebted to the recent solicitude of Tambroni, for Cennino Cennini's little work? Lorenzo Ghiberti's work shared a similar fate; and, even now, there are many treatises by Lionardo da Vinci, which have not been printed. The past and present century, which may be justly termed the two epochs of solemn reparations to the names of the great men who vied with each other in honouring their respective countries, have begun to study the history, and illustrate the works of these celebrated Italians, whose genius has crowned their peninsula with glory. Such, too, was the fate of our Colonna, till Filibien, Apostolo Zeno, Fossati, and Algarotti vindicated his fame. But foremost in this work were Temanza and Father Federici, of the Dominican Order, who laboured with incredible diligence to dissipate the clouds that hung over the author, and the mysterious book entitled, "The Dream of Polifilo."

Amongst the families expelled from Lucca, by the tyranny of Castruccio Castracane, was that of Colonna, which, like many others of the period, sought and found hospitality in Venice.[1] Our Francesco was born there in the year 1433, and received a splendid education, in every respect worthy of his talents and social position. The Venetians very wisely thought that to perfect the civil and scientific education of their young patricians, it was not enough to have acquired knowledge from books by way of precept, but that it was absolutely necessary to visit foreign countries, and to study the customs of

[1] Vite dei piu celebri architetti Veneziani, Venezia, 1778, 1 vol. 4to.

peoples, their laws, arts, religion, and politics. Temanza however, supposes that Francesco, when a very young man, travelled in the East, visiting Greece, Egypt, and Constantinople to store his mind with varied and rarest erudition. He states, moreover, that he saw all Italy, and that he made a long sojourn in Rome, where he collected these antiquarian notices with which his book abounds. When his biographer could find no further traces of Colonna, he fancied that his life should be sought in his Art-Romance; and that Polifilo, who is its hero, was also the author of the mysterious dream. For this reason he assumed that Colonna, till his thirty-fourth year, was an idle tourist and married to Polia, the heroine of the composition; and that on the death of his spouse, he took the Dominican habit. But all romances are very fallacious guides, for Father Federici has discovered documents which prove that in the year 1455 Colonna belonged to the institute of the Preaching-Friars, *i. e.* when he was but twenty-two years of age—that he resided in Trevigi till 1472; that in the latter place he taught rhetoric and languages, and was master of the young religious—that in 1473 the University of Padua gave him the degree of bachelor; and finally, that he there studied Theology, and was decorated with the laurea. Whosoever desires to find this subject more fully developed, needs but to read the Trevigian Memoirs of the author we have been quoting. Here follow two other documents, one of which informs us that he was Lector to his religious; and the other states that in 1485 he was procurator for the nuns of S. Paolo, in Trevigi. Other notices, omitted by F. Federici, will be found in Temanza's work. Amongst these is an act of the Council of SS. Giovanni and Paolo, in Venice, (a convent to which Colonna was probably affiliated,) dated October,

1523, which shows how careful the friars were of his old age, as it ordains that "Father Francis Colonna shall every day have as much wood as the infirmarian can carry; and that the Sacristan shall each day give him four pence (quatuor solidi) and bread and wine, and all this in consideration of his wants, necessities, and decrepitude." Finally, his decease is dated in the Necrology of that convent, "October 2nd, 1527, in the 94th year of his age." He was honoured with a private sepulchre in the cloister of his convent, as appears from the registry of the monumental inscriptions of SS. Giovanni and Paolo, compiled by Father Luciani.[1]

Having premised so much, we must now speak of the studies and works of this most learned man. All writers agree in saying that he was skilled in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac. But the pursuit that constituted his chiefest delight was that of antiquity, and especially of that branch of it which has relation to the Fine Arts. He was deeply read in Vitruvius and the work of Leon Battista Alberti, which was published in his time. Chronology, Numismatics, and monumental inscriptions were all familiar to him, and in each of these departments he acquired much knowledge during his travels. That a man so deeply versed in the theory of architecture must have raised various edifices in his own country and elsewhere, is very likely, even though history does not record them; but even supposing that such was not the case, no one, I believe, will deny him an honourable place amongst the great architects, since Milizia and Temanza have conceded it to him, although the former (because he could not penetrate the obscure significancy of his artistic-poem) renounced all veneration for him.[2]

[1] Memorie Trevigiane.

[2] Loc. cit p. 52, 53, Memorie degli architetti antichie moderni.

Father Colonna, desiring to give us, in a single work, a sample of his deep studies, and to render the doctrine of Vitruvius familiar to all, fancied that the dogmatic style would revolt the generality of readers, who wish to become, or mayhap appear, learned, with as little labour as possible. He doubtless fancied that the best method of inculcating science, together with a knowledge of antiquity and art, was that which should prove novel and delectable to persons of every condition. Influenced by this persuasion, he wrote the Art-Romance, to which he gave a sesquipedal Greek title, which was quite enough to terrify the polished and terse Annibale Caro, and, indeed, the generality of readers. The title is "*Hypnerotomachia di Polifiol;*" or, in other words, "*The Combat of Love in a Dream.*" In this dream, fantastic and bizarre beyond all other dreams, and surely much longer than any ordinary dream, he fancied that he beheld all the objects of the Fine Arts that he describes; and that he encountered in his somnolent state all these amorous incidents which make up a large folio volume. Had the "*Hypnerotomachia*" been turned into verse, it must have been as long as the Morgante Maggiore of Pulci, the Ricciardetto of Forteguerri, or the Orlando of Ariosto and Berni. But that which overwhelms the patience of every one is the pedantic style, by means of which he sought to cloak his arcane doctrines and the lascivious loves of his Polifilo; so much so, that the Dream often acts on the reader's eyes like a narcotic. As the author concealed his name, not wishing (and with very good reason) to be thought an indecent writer, some persons imagined that they had discovered his motive. Fossati, for example, believed Polifilo to have been a Servite Friar, masked like another Filoxeno; and Fontanini would have us suppose that he was a contemplative

canon. On the other hand, F. Petrogalli and Apostolo Zeno found the name of Francesco Colonna, in acrostics, in the initial letters of the chapters of the work. Nor did the vagaries of the writers who sought to find the history of this antiquarian friar in the adventures of Polifilo end here. They resolved to discover who was the Polia with whom the unhappy Polifilo was so much smitten, and in my opinion she was as much a real entity as was Don Quixote's Dulcinea. Such conjectures are more laughable than the most amusing incidents of any dream. Others have determined Polia to be an allegorical person, or another name for Science, Antiquity, and Architecture, the study of which occupied Colonna's whole life; and we, for our part, very willingly subscribe to this opinion. Various people, notwithstanding, maintained that Polia was not an ideal person, but a concrete of flesh and bone —in a word, a handsome young woman, of the family of Poli. Some fancied her to have been a Lucrezia, or Camilla Collalto; and Temanza and Federici would have us believe that the Hypolita, (playfully termed Polia,) was the daughter of a certain Francesco Lelio, a lawyer of Trevigi. But we will prove by Colonna's own words, that all such conjectures are baseless; and we will at the same time unveil the allegory of the Art—Romance; though we may not attempt to clear him of the charge of being a very loose writer. He forcibly reminds us of the too celebrated Matteo Bandello, who in the last years of Colonna's life was writing his indecent Novels in Milan. So wide spread was pravity in these days, that it had corrupted all classes![1]

The time in which this long and learned dream com-

[1] Bandello's Romeo and Juliet is an exception to all his Novelle, which deserve the character given them by F. Marchese.

menced, seems to have been indicated by the author himself, at the end of the work, in the following words: "*Trevigi, where the most wretched Polifilo was held in bonds by Polia, MCCCCLXVII., Kalendis Maii,*" in which year Colonna was lector in his convent of S. Niccolò, Trevigi, and had attained his thirty-fourth year. Some have thought that this is the date of the publication, but the first opinion is preferable. It went through two Aldine editions, and was translated into French by Jean Martin, secretary to Cardinal Lenencourt, who also translated Vitruvius and Leon Battista Alberti into the same language by order of Francis I. of France. The Italian editions have many woodcuts, which Federici says were designed by Giovanni Bellini, the Venetian painter; or, if we are to believe Temanza, by Colonna himself. As a remarkable work, reflecting honour on the age and Italy, Lorenzo Crasso dedicated it to Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino. But it is now time to introduce the reader to the mysterious dream of Polifilo, and to unfold its arcane significance.

In my opinion, the very title reveals the author's innermost mind: "*Hypnerotomachia, Poliphili ubi humana omnia non nisi esse somnium docet,*" (Polifilo's Battle of Love, in which he shows that all human things are but a dream,) being an evident allusion to the vanity and instability of all earthly affairs. This moral and philosophical scope is placed in a still clearer light by the author in the preface, where he distinctly reveals his project. Let us hear himself: "Reader, if thou desirest to learn what this book contains, know that Polifilo narrates the wonderful things he beheld in a dream, and that he has given the work a Greek title, which signifies the "Battle of Love in a Dream." In this work he feigns that he saw many ancient things

worthy of being recorded, and that he himself saw them all one by one, and he describes them according to their proper names in an elegant style, (not very)—they are Pyramids, Obelisks, great Ruins of buildings, the difference of columns, their measurement, the capitals, bases, epystyles, friezes, cornices, and their adornments. A great horse—an immense elephant—a colossus—a magnificent harbour, with its dimensions and ornaments. A fright, the five senses in five nymphs, a beautiful bath, fountains, the palace of the queen, which is free-will, . . . a game of chess, . . . a labyrinth, which is human life," etc. From all this, it is very manifest that Polifilo's dream should not be understood in any other than an allegorical sense; as he himself tells us that the five nymphs are simple allusions to the five senses, which act as handmaids to the soul, and convey to it the forms of material objects. The queen of the royal palace is free-will, that governs and influences the body and the sensitive appetites. Finally, the tortuous labyrinth represents the many vicissitudes of life, and the various contingencies to which it is subject. Hence, I conclude that the Polia who so fascinated Polifilo was no other than the study of antiquity, as the whole Art-Romance bears evidence of the love with which Colonna cultivated it. As the author proceeds in his work, he develops its allegorical sense. For example, in the first chapter of the first part, he narrates how he dreamed that he *wandered along a quiet, silent shore, all uncultivated*, and that, *trembling with great fear, he entered a dense and gloomy forest.* Words which clearly refer to our first entrance into life, which may be aptly compared to a dense and opaque forest, wherein it is easy—alas! too easy—to lose oneself. In the second chapter Polifilo, dreading the dangers of the forest, prostrates himself in prayer

before Diespiter, and, feeling himself parched by thirst, applies his lips to a stream of limpid water: but in the very act he is spell-bound by some one who sings a melodious strain, and he gets up and abandons the stream for the Syren. Here we see adumbrated the yearning of our youth for knowledge, which is too often diverted and destroyed by sensible objects. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters are devoted to a description of the great architectural works which he had seen *in a valley wonderfully enclosed;* nor do we think we err in stating that the author's object was to shew how no one can become learned in that science without long and laborious study. Thus it would be easy to turn, if not the whole, at least the greater part of the Dream into a moral sense. As to the amours of Polifilo, we have nothing to say of them; and whosoever desires to be acquainted with the scientific portion of the work, particularly on architecture, Vitruvius, and Leon Battista Alberti, let him read Temanza. We will now take a cursory glance of the great merits of the "Hypnerotomachia," and of the vast services it has done to all the arts and their cultivators. Father Federici observes that all these precious objects of art which he feigned to have seen in a dream, are not inventions, but realities, which came under his notice when he was travelling. Amongst these were marble monuments, coins, cameos, (for which name we are indebted to him,) cornelians, and other precious stones, in which he was deeply skilled.[1] "So much so," says Federici, "that we are not to believe what M. Mariette states in his Dattiliographia, namely,

[1] We have elsewhere alluded to the museum which was formed by Father Francesco Massa in the convent of S. Niccolo, Trevigi, where Colonna lived for many years. Here there was a valuable collection of cameos and cornelians which Polifilo must have studied.

that Antoine Le Pois and Enea Vico di Parma were the first illustrators of the lapidary monuments of the ancients. On the contrary, Colonna preceded them all, and was the first to make impressions from the marbles themselves, in all that related to the religion of the Gentiles; and he it was who illustrated and published their sculptures, and described their value and their superstitious uses. The Roman inscriptions, historical and sepulchral, that he copied, form the *beautiful Polifilian lapidary museum*, and these, in most part, are gems which he read on the various marble monuments, and which were collected by Gruter, Gudio, Gori, and at an earlier period by Ciriaco, Feliciano, and Giocondo, who interpreted them—all these are encountered in the dream. He gives us the precepts of Vitruvius, in the author's own words, and sometimes in these of Leon Battista Alberti, thus proving himself to have been a most zealous cultivator of architecture, no matter what Milizia fanatically says to the contrary. It was from him that Bernardino Baldo derived so much knowledge: he was the first to solve the problem of forming a polygon of seven sides within a circle, and this geometrical discovery has been claimed most unfairly by others, who plumed themselves on it. He was the first to teach the new form of the Vitruvian volutes, and true arches, divesting them of all Gothicism: he did much for harmonics: he has given us the most distinct and exact notion of the five orders, with the interpretation of Vitruvius, and the most correct measurement of the ancient Roman fabrics, together with the dimensions of harbours, palaces, piazzas, bascourts, temples, all most accurately designed, even out of the debris of the ancient edifices which are crumbling in Rome. And now, will any one refuse to admit Polifilo to a distinguished place amongst

architects and the writers on this first-born of the arts?

Not satisfied with having treasured the most precious antiquities, Colonna also gives us some valuable essays on the progress of art, from the days of the Renaissance to his own times. Hence, we find in the Dream, the description of Dante's Inferno, painted by Giotto in Padua; that of the Triumph of Cæsar, painted by Mantegna in Mantua; together with descriptions of Theodoric's Mausoleum in Ravenna, Donatello's Bronze Horse in Padua, and the Obelisk, which is supported by the Elephant, in the Piazza Minerva at Rome. With regard to the latter, we may here state, what is universally admitted, that Bernino took the conception, design, and proportions of this work, from Colonna's dream. Add, to all this, the descriptions of the Game of Chess; the twenty emblems that were painted in the cloister of S. Giustina in Padua, by Bernardo Parentino, and many other works of art and antiquity; and finally, a valuable Treatise on Grotesque Painting, in which Morto da Feltre, Giovanni da Udine, Baldassare Peruzzi, Perin del Vaga, and others, acquired such celebrity. Wherefore, we cordially agree with Federici, and anxiously hope that some one skilled in these sciences, will undertake to winnow Colonna's rich gleanings of the chaff—I mean the fantastical and amorous follies—and give us as much of the work as relates to antiquarian erudition, and the doctrines of classic architecture. Freed from much unintelligible jargon, this work would be of the greatest value to Italian art. We will now conclude this notice in the words of M. Seroux D'Agincourt:—"We will not attempt to analyse Polifilo's Dream; but simply remark that Colonna, yielding to the sweetest illusions of love, and most fervid enthusiasm for art, has

proved himself, in the picture created by his warm imagination, to have been a painter, sculptor, and architect. His grand object was to reproduce the beautiful monuments of antiquity, from which, as he himself states, he learned all he knew. To architecture he devoted his most profound attention. Stimulated by the reading of Vitruvius, enlightened by the contemplation of the ancient edifices, which had then begun to be studied, the friar, in his own peculiar style, walks in the foot-prints of Leon Battista Alberti—placing, so to say, the rules and principles of the Florentine Professor, in action. He sees, in a dream, but he makes his readers behold in reality, all that some commentators had only attempted to explain, sometimes without being understood by others, or even by themselves. The idea of teaching architecture in this fashion, and giving its precepts a poetical colouring, was very ingenious. Colonna's book had most beneficial influence on his age, and contributed to the resuscitation of art."[1]

[1] Histoire de l'Art, v. 2.

PAINTERS ON GLASS

IN THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

CHAPTER XII.

Of some Tuscan Painters, and Fra Bartolomeo Perugino.

Having narrated with all possible diligence the notices of the life and works of these members of the Dominican Order who cultivated architecture, sculpture, and painting during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries; and having given a brief sketch of the Tuscan miniaturists of the two last centuries, it only remained for us to record those who studied mosaic and glass-painting, to which, being inferior arts, we give the last place. Amongst the Dominicans I have not found a single mosaicist, properly so called; but as that style of art is so much akin to glass-painting, and as some of our friars attained to great celebrity in the latter, I would fain hope that they thus made amends for their deficiency in the former. That they had many and most renowned artists in this branch is indubitable; and, in my opinion, no other glass-painter has ever excelled Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat; but as he belongs to the sixteenth century, we will have occasion to speak of him in the second volume of these Memoirs.

The art of painting on glass was cultivated in Italy as early as the eighth century, in the pontificate of Leo III., as may be seen in the treatise on this subject and mosaic, published by Muratori, in the second volume of Italian

Antiquities, and written by an anonymous of the same eighth century; and there is also some trace of it in the work of the monk Theophilus, who flourished in the ninth century. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries this art was fondly cherished by the Order of the Gesuati, particularly in Tuscany; and the cathedrals of Florence, Arezzo,[1] and other cities present many remains of their excellence in this department. Like miniature, it constituted the delight of the cloistered for many an age; and we will never be able to appreciate the great services which it rendered to Italy, till some one shall have given us a history or even a copious essay on the art of glass-painting Whether it was that the Italians did not care to cultivate this sort of painting, or that the glass which they had did not answer the purpose, (it was chiefly manufactured in Venice and was not remarkable for its transparency) it is certain that the Ultramontanes excelled them in preparing and colouring it; but in invention and the composition of the histories and ornaments, we may be said to have excelled all others, since Pietro Perugino, Lorenzo Ghiberti, Donatello, and men of such note, very frequently furnished the designs.

The fifteenth century is, perhaps, the most luminous period of glass-painting; in that which succeeded, it reached its perfection and terminated its career. In the early ages it followed the symbolism of Christian art; and as its most noble object was to convey moral instruction, we sometimes find it associated with the Evangelical word.[2] In subsequent ages, it was raised to the

[1] Gaye, Carteggio Inedito, etc., v. 2, App. p. 449.

[2] We should never forget the pious solicitude of the Curè of Saint Nixier di Troyes, who caused three windows to be painted to serve as a Catechism and instruction to the people. V. Rio Poesie Chretienne, c. i. p. 38.

dignity of historical painting; till the barbarism of man and the ruthlessness of time destroyed these wonderfully storied windows whose beauteous colourings tinted the walls and floors of our ancient basilicas, and impressed the worshipper with most solemn and holy thoughts. There is no heart so savage, wrote Montaigne, that will not feel itself filled with reverence when it considers the sombre vastness of our churches, and the variety of their ornaments; when it hears the pealings of the organ, and the sweet and religious harmony of our canticles. The present century is making an effort to revive an art which its three predecessors had almost caused to be forgotten. In France it has had most happy results, but we cannot say so much of Italy.[1]

The Tuscans, who are always foremost in these Memoirs in painting, sculpture, and architecture, were also the most distinguished painters on glass. The Necrologies of this region record many men who were famous in this art, but they are uncertain and very jejune. The chronicle of the convent of S. Catherine, in Pisa, extols, above all others, a certain Fra Domenico Pollini, a native of Cagliari, in Sardinia, affiliated to that convent, and praises him for his skill in music, miniaturing, and glass-painting. He, it appears, was a priest, and died in 1340. Somewhat more copious is the eulogy bestowed on Fra Michele, of Pisa, who was also a priest: he is described as a grave and solitude-loving religious, and a perfect master of the art of glass-painting. He painted the great window in the church of S. Domenico, (Pistoja,) now destroyed, and another in the refectory of S. Catherine, at

1 M. Emile Thibaud has established a manufactory for glass-painting at Clermont Ferrand, and published some historical notices on the ancient and modern windows. Lievel and Langlois have likewise written on this subject.

Pisa.[1] The convent of Santa Maria Novella presents to us a Florentine lay-brother, named Fra Giacomo di Andrea, who had considerable skill in this art. In the following century Fra Bernardino, a priest, is called (in the Necrology) a most excellent master of glass-painting (magister fenestrarum vitrearum optimus); he died in Florence, A. D., 1450. But the artist who deserves to be classed amongst the chiefest of Italy, in the fifteenth century, was Fra Bartolomeo of Perugia, of whom we will give such notices as we have been able to collect in the archives of the convent of that city.

Three Dominicans undertook to write the memoirs of that convent. The first is an anonymous of the fourteenth century, and author of a brief chronicle, which is in the style of the Necrologies. It begins in 1232, and terminates in 1345.[2] The second is Father Domenico Baglioni of Perugia, who continued it from 1500 to 1503. The third is the often-mentioned F. Timoteo Bottonio, a most learned religious, and as far as I know, most accurate. He has left two MS. folio vols. of Annals of Universal History, divided into four parts, the first of which treats of General History; the second of the History of Perugia; the third of the principal events relating to the Dominican Order; and the last, of such as regarded his convent of S. Domenico; but as to

[1] "Frater Dominicus Sardus de Pollinis Kallaritanus fuit valde gratiosus et probus, soavissimæ conversationis. Cantabat bene, scribebat pulcre, et finestras vitreas operabatur optime. Frater Michael Domine Pine, dictus Pisanus fuit antiquus pater coellicula continuus. Fuit perfectus magister in arte vitrorum ita ut fenestram pistoriensis conventus faceret in ecclesia, et in refectorio nostro, et quidquid in conventu reficiendum videbat, promptissime resarcire curabat." Migravit ut supra. (1340.)

[2] Chron. de ob. Frat. Prædicat. conv. S. Dom. de Perusio, ab anno 1232. Father Baglioni is author of a poem, entitled "De fuga Christi in Egyptum."

facts, it is little better than an amplified Historical Index. To these, we might add, a Historical Description of the church of S. Domenico in Perugia, by F. Reginald Boarini, and some MS. memoirs of that convent by F. Agostino Guiducci.[1] From these writers we will glean as much as we can regarding this great artist.

All the aforesaid historians are silent as to the year of Fra Bartolomeo's birth and decease. His father was a certain Peter, and if we are to credit Serafino Siepi, was called Vanni Accomandati.[2] But of this cognomen there is no mention in the Conventual Chronicles. This writer says that he, for some time, exercised the office of syndic. Bottonio and Baglioni, however, agree in stating that he was elected Superior of his convent, (S. Domenico,) A.D. 1413; a fact which assures us of his integrity, as well as prudence. The loss of old documents has occasioned great penury in the notices of the life and productions of this rare artist. Baglioni blames the negligence of the friars of that convent for not continuing the memoirs, in which there is a vacuum of more than one century, and particularly of the fifteenth.[3] Hence, it is quite impossible to discover from whom Fra Bartolomeo learned the art of glass-painting, or what works should be attributed to him. There remains, however, for the honor and glory of his name, a most beautifully painted window, in the church of S. Domenico in Perugia, which in dimensions, composition, and excel-

1 Boarini's work was published in 1778.

2 Descriz. Tropologica della città di Perugia da S. Siepi. Perugia, 1822.

3 Chronica de obitu etc, "Postquam per centum et plures annos hæc intermissa est chronica de glorioso obitu fratrum conv. S. Dom. de Perusio, vel viventium neglectu vel oblivione seu negligentia, vel quod libellus iste ad tempus latuerit . . . . visum est mihi fratri Dominico quondam Francisci Ballionii de Perusio, etc. . . . innovare pro viribus."

lence of colouring, surpasses all that are in Italy; these by Fra G. Marcillat in Arezzo, excepted.

It is ninety-five palms high, by thirty-four and a half wide. It is divided in the centre by a travertine tree, whose summit forms various branches, chiselled out of the same stone. In its upper extremity is the Eternal Father, who sustains the globe, and is in the act of blessing. The branches are intertwined in the form of small circles, which contain various Seraphims, and a figure that seems to be surrounded by tongues of fire. This summit is supported by an architrave, under which are four orders of Saints; then comes a base, and after the base an inscription. The figures are whole, and enclosed within a little Gothic temple, according to the style of that age. In the first order are:—S. Peter, S. Paul, S. John Baptist, the Angel Gabriel, an Annunciation, S. John the Evangelist, which last figure being destroyed, was substituted by a painting on canvas, but so transparent as to appear, like the others, on glass. In the second order are:—S. Stephen, S. Peter Martyr, S. Constance, S. Herculanus, S. Dominic, and S. Laurence. In the third—S. Thomas of Aquino, S. Augustin, S. Gregory, S. Ambrose, S. Jerom, and a holy Dominican Bishop; which, according to Siepi, is S. Antonino, which is improbable, as that Saint died in 1459, and was canonized in 1523. Under this order are twelve circlets, with twelve half figures, of Founders of religious Orders. In the fourth order he painted S. Lucy, S. Dorothy, S. Mary Magdalene, S. Catherine of Siena, S. Agnese, V. M., and S. Catherine, V. M. On the base, in little figures, he historied the Martyrdom of S. James the Apostle, with three Miracles; and at the sides he introduced the armorial cognizance of the Graziani family; who, probably, defrayed the expense of the window. Lower

down, we read in Gothic characters, the following inscription:—

To the Honor of God and the Most Holy Virgin Mary,
of St. James the Apostle, and the Blessed Dominic our Founder,
and of the
Whole Celestial Choir,
and to perpetuate his own name,
Brother Bartolomeo,
Son of Peter of Perugia, the least of the illustrious Order of the Preachers,
painted this Glass Window, and, with the Divine Aid,
finished it in the
fourteen hundredth and eleventh year after the Incarnation of the Lord,
in the month of August.

The design of this window is grand, and the colouring most exquisite, but exceeding these in beauty are the ornaments, particularly of the little Gothic temples which enclose the little figures. The history of S. James, on the base, is so well conceived and executed, that no work of the same dimensions is to be found amongst these of the fifteenth century to surpass it. The extremities, however, are not very correctly designed, and in the expression of the heads we miss that accuracy and truth that astonish us in the windows of Arezzo. But this is a defect, not of the artist, but of his times, for it required many centuries of study and labour to overcome the difficulty that attended painting the nude on glass. Moreover, nearly all the glass-painters were very feeble in design, and availed themselves of cartoons designed and coloured by painters, whereas G. di Marcillat, who executed the windows of the cathedral of Arezzo, was also a good frescoist, as his paintings on the ceiling of the same church prove.

No one will suppose that Fra Bartolomeo lacked genius to produce other works of this sort, although we

cannot point them out. But, despite the traditions of three centuries, and the inscription of the author, some have striven to rob the artist of the glory of this work, and Perugia of one of the most distinguished glass-painters of the fifteenth century. Mariotti was the first who doubted this truth, having persuaded himself that Bindo di Siena was its author.[1] Siepi adopted his opinion. We, after giving the arguments of both, will maintain that the Perugian Friar was its indubitable artist, the meagreness of the Memoirs notwithstanding.

"We must observe," says Siepi, "with the learned Mariotti, that the date, (1411,) which is here marked, does not belong to this work, for we cannot suppose that the window was finished before the church, which was not completed till 1458. Moreover, the art of glass-painting was not familiar to us before 1436. . . . . and Campano assures us, (in Vita Pii II.,) that in 1459, when Pius II. passed through Perugia, and consecrated this church, he ordered that the great window then opened behind the grand altar should be closed *opere vitreo artificio et textura texellata*." The author opines, with Mariotti, that, there was another painted window of an earlier period in the lateral wall of the choir, and an altar dedicated to S. James the Apostle, belonging to the Graziani family; and that when the window was closed up, the painted-glass and altar destroyed, and the title removed to the grand altar, some portions of the old painted-glass, and particularly the inscription, with the histories of S. James, were employed by Bindo di Siena and Benedetto di Valdorcia to form the base of the actual great window now at the end of the choir; and, as far as Fra Bartolomeo is con-

[1] Lettere Pittoriche Perugine. Perugia, 1778.

cerned, that he was simply recorded there because he was syndic of the convent, which, with the oblations of the faithful, and particularly of the Graziani family, had caused the painted-glass window to be executed in 1411.[1]

So inconclusive do the first reasons appear, that we will not expend many words in confuting them; but the grave authority of Campano deserves more serious consideration.

When Fra Bartolomeo was employed at his glass-painting in 1411, the church of S. Domenico in Perugia may be said to have been well nigh finished, as Giovanni Pisano had erected the central nave, after his own designs, as early as 1304, or thereabouts. The choir in which the window in question is, is a remain of the ancient church. About the middle of that same fourteenth century, the Dominicans of Perugia were zealously labouring to embellish their temple through the agency of the most distinguished artists, amongst whom was Buonamico Buffalmacco; and the building of the church was not yet perfected. Now why might not Fra Bartolomeo have painted this window sixty years afterwards? Neither is it easy to understand how, after having asserted that there was a painted glass window in the lateral part of the choir before 1459, there might not also have been another at the end of the choir. As to saying that the Perugians were not familiar with glass-painting before 1436, it is manifestly contradicted by the inscription, which bears date 1411. Fra Bartolomeo might have learned the art outside his own country; and we have already seen that some of his confreres were skilled in it a century before, and that they left proof of this in Pisa, Pistoja, and Florence. But let us return to Campano, a contemporaneous writer.

Narrating the arrival in Perugia of Pius II., in 1459,

[1] Descrizione Tropol. v. 3.

he writes:—"*And at the instance of the citizens, on account of the great dimensions of the church, he dedicated it to S. Dominic, and he was the first to make offerings; and he ordered a painted glass window of great magnitude to be placed near the great altar.*"[1] From which words we easily collect the Pontiff's order to construct a window of painted-glass for the choir. Supposing Campano's narrative to be true, I think it reasonable to answer, that, instead of an order, the Pope expressed a wish; and that, as he did not give the friars the necessary means, they fancied that they could not satisfy his holiness's pleasure, save by removing the entire window executed in 1411, which was in the lateral wall of the choir, and placing it at the end of the same. As to what Mariotti and Siepi say of its destruction, it is wholly gratuitous. Moreover, if the Pontiff had contributed to defray the whole, or even a part of the expense, neither the name of Fra Bartolomeo, even though he were the syndic who caused the work to be executed, nor the armorial cognizance of the Graziani could have figured on it; on the contrary, we should have had a eulogium on the generosity of the Pontiff, and probably his escutcheon. To all this we will add that this window does not present evidences to make us believe it an ensemble of two works; on the contrary, such unity of conception pervades the whole heavenly hierarchy which it represents, together with some passages in the life of S. James, that we must regard the entire as the production of one mind and one hand.

Let the words of the inscription be well pondered. "Fra Bartolomeo, son of Peter . . . . painted this glass window to perpetuate his name, and with the Divine aid finished it," &c. Now, when was any religious who, with the

[1] Joann. Campanus. opera omnia in Vita Pii II.

money collected from the faithful, caused works of art to be executed, allowed to set them forth as his own productions? And if the Graziani family supplied the means, as their armorial bearings and the conventual memoirs record, and if Bindo di Siena painted the work; what are we to think of the modesty of the Friar who asserts that he executed it to perpetuate his own name?[1]

To these arguments, which to us appear conclusive, we will add the authority of the historians of that convent. In the Chronicle (de Obitu F. F. Prædicatorum) we read, I believe in Baglioni's hand, "Fra Bartolomeo of Perugia, who painted the wonderful window of our church, as clearly appears by the inscription. Of that ingenious man we have no other work." Again: "Fra Bartolomeo was a man of genius, and he constructed the window of our church, as appears from the words on the same." In 1460, a year after the arrival of Pius II., in Perugia there died in the convent of S. Dominic a religious, called Giuliano d'Agnolo, a Perugian, who left a MS. memoir relative to the same convent. This was seen by F. Bottonio; and amongst other illustrious religious whom it records, he found distinct mention of "Fra Bartolomeo, who painted the great window."[2] Baglioni, in his Registry of the church and sacristy of S. Domenico, in Perugia, which he commenced in 1548, speaking of the presbytery, writes: "And the great painted window was *made* by the Graziani family, as appears by the arms of that family (one of the most noble in Perugia) at foot of the painting.

[1] Siepi writes that Pier Antonio Graziani, in 1547, left a bequest of five florins yearly for the maintenance of the Presbytery and choir, from which obligation Captain Felice Graziani freed himself a few years afterwards, by payment of one hundred florins.

[2] Annali, vol ii., p. 119.

Said family also *made* the presbytery, as is clearly proved by their cognizances.[1]" If I have hitherto seemed to regard Campano's account of the order given by Pius II. to paint a great window at the end of the choir, (in 1459,) as true, nevertheless, I cannot give it my entire assent, for we read in the MS. Annals of F. Bottonio, ad ann. 1411: "The great painted window of our church was finished in this year, as appears by the inscription thereon." Again, under date 1455, he writes, that "the curtains which are on the great painted window, were made in this year;" that is to say, four years before the Pope's arrival in Perugia.[2] Describing the consecration of the church, he shows himself to be particular in the veriest minutiæ. "Our church was dedicated, or rather consecrated, in this year by Pope Pius II. on Sunday, Feb. 10, the bishop of the city made the unctions and performed the ceremonies; and the archpriest sang the Mass, the Pope being at the altar on the side of the choir."[3] Now, how could Bottonio, who was so throughly acquainted with his country's history, not to speak of that of his convent, and who is so particular about every circumstance—how could he have been ignorant of what Campano writes concerning the window ordered by the Pope? Serafino Razzi, who was the contemporary of Bottonio, and who was lector of theology in that convent, in his work (The Illustrious Men of the Preaching-Friars) which we have had frequent occasion to quote, speaks thus of our celebrated Artist:—"Fra Bartolomeo da Perugia, was the author and constructor of the painted glass window of the principal chapel (in the choir); and that he painted it is proved by the inscription at foot of it."

[1] Registry MS.

[2] Loc. cit. v. 2, fol. 21 and fol. 103.

[3] Loc. Cit. ad ann. 1459.

With such authorities as these before us, I must conclude that Campano either erred in attributing the window to Pius II., or that the actual one was removed from the lateral wall, not only with its base but in its entirety; and that Fra Bartolomeo was the painter who coloured it. The unanimity of the ancient writers, and the words of the inscription confirm us in this opinion; therefore, till the authority of Campano shall have been corroborated by irrefragable proofs, we will insist that Fra Bartolomeo "to perpetuate God's glory and his own name," painted this marvellous window, which is a solemn monument to his genius and memory.

CHAPTER X.

Notices of the Blessed James of Ulm and of his Disciples in Glass-Painting.

Narrating the lives and works of the Dominican artists, we have often had occasion to speak of the rare goodness of some of them, who made art the medium for imparting religious and moral instruction. Foremost, amongst these, were the Blessed Guglielmo Agnelli, Fra Giovannino da Marcojano, Fra Gerolamo Monsignori, and that most devout painter Fra Giovanni Angelico. At present we are about to speak of one who attained much celebrity in glass-painting, and whose exemplary life has caused the Catholic Church to rank him amongst her Beatified. This man is the Blessed James, the German, of the convent of S. Domenico in Bologna.

As the life of the Blessed James has been written by many and accurate historians, we have not to lament

the poverty of materials. Nevertheless, we have to regret, that very few of his paintings on glass remain, and that there are many attributed to him, to which we cannot establish his claim. Most infelicitous indeed is the condition of this art, whose productions are liable to so many accidents. It may be justly termed the most perishable of any style of painting, since the most trifling contingency can destroy the work of long years of labour and study.

The Blessed James was born in the city of Ulm, A.D. 1407. His father was called Theodoric, and was a merchant. Fra Ambrogino da Soncino, a Dominican lay-brother, (who was also a pupil of the Blessed James,) the earliest biographer of this illustrious artist, records that, in his youth, he devoted himself to the study of mechanics, for which he had a peculiar aptness; and that he also applied himself to glass-painting, in which the Germans and Flemings had attained great celebrity. Being of a very religious turn of mind, he set out to visit the sepulchre of the Prince of the Apostles; for, indeed, there were very few in these ages of faith who did not yearn to see that venerable shrine, and bathe it with their tears. He arrived at Rome, in 1432, being then only twenty-five years of age; and so ineffable was the delight which he experienced, while tarrying on the soil, sanctified by the blood of so many martyrs, that he would fain have dwelt there for ever. When, however, his money was exhausted, he set out for Naples, and took service under the banner of Alfonso, King of Arragon; and was engaged in that memorable fight in which the valour of the Genoese deprived Alfonso of his throne and liberty. For four years he carried the sword with integrity and valour; but at length, tiring of the military life, he got into the service of a private

citizen of Capua. In 1440, or '41, the love of Father-land, or that home-sickness which visits every gentle soul, induced him to set out to embrace his aged father. Having reached Bologna, on his way to Germany, he visited the shrine of S. Dominic, and whilst praying before it, felt himself inspired to renounce his earthly home, and to go in pursuit of the "True Land." At the gate of that convent, (S. Domenico,) when thirty-four years of age, he asked, and obtained, the lay-brother's habit. For fifty years he lived a most holy life, in the Dominican institute, and died, October 11, 1491. A pilgrim, a soldier, and a monk, he was a mirror of every virtue. Pope Leo XII., enrolled him amongst the Beatified, in 1825, and the church solemnizes his memory on the 12th of October. Whosoever may desire to know more of his life, can consult "Melloni's Acts of the Bolognese Saints," and Leandro Alberto in the fifth book of his "Eulogiums of the Illustrious Men of the Preaching-Friars." We can speak here only of his merits as an artist.

Scarcely had the Blessed James put on the Dominican habit, when he resumed the practice of glass-painting, which had been interrupted by nine years absence from his native land; and, in fact, Fra Ambrogino, in the 18th chapter of his Chronicle, states that he had been a disciple of the Blessed James for fully thirty-three years. The earliest notice of his works that I have been able to discover, is dated 1465. In the public archive of Demanio in Bologna, there are two MS. volumes, now belonging to the convent of S. Domenico, which contain entries of sums expended on that building, and on the decorations of the church itself. One of these volumes was written in 1465, and the other in the following year by the lay-brother Fra Bartolomeo di Vigevano. In

both there is an account of the cost of the windows painted by the Blessed James: For example, in the book marked F. G. No. 2, under date 1465, we find the following entry:—"Fra Giacomo of Germany, is to receive, May 3rd, for works executed at various times, thirty-eight pounds, (libre,) and two soldi, in three payments, which are to be debited to this building." Again, under date, 1466, we read:—"Fra Giacomo of Germany, (of the windows,) is to receive, April 16th, seven soldi, on account of the iron work which Guglielmo da Como executed in our forge, for the eye of the window." Other entries of this sort are very frequent. In another journal, of the building of the same convent, we find, ad. ann. 1467, a memorandum of monies expended "*on colours*, for the windows of the library. Ad. ann. 1468, there is an entry of sixteen, (Bolognini,) paid to *Micheli for the design* of the *window of the library*." From this, we think, we may infer that Fra Giacomo was assisted by others in *designing*. Similar entries for painting the windows of the library are found as late as 1472; and the last time his name appears in that journal, is in 1480, when he had completed his seventy-third year. He also painted the windows of the refectory of his convent, two windows in the chapel of S. Dominic, and the great eye over the principal door of said church, which Vincenzo Vannini certifies to have been exceedingly beautiful. His brethren do not at present possess any work by this distinguished artist. Over the entrance of the first dormitory there is a little history on glass, which an ancient tradition attributes to the Blessed Giacomo; it represents the Crucifixion, with the B. V. M., and S. John the Evangelist, in small figures. Having examined it accurately, I deem it to be the work of an earlier artist. Others agree in this opinion;

and the Bologna "Guide-book" terms it the most ancient glass-painting which that city possesses.[1]

But the works which secured the greatest celebrity for him, as a glass-painter, are the windows in the cathedral of San Petronio, which are still preserved. All writers of his life extol their beauty; and the Bologna Guide pronounces a merited eulogium on them. But who could now determine the age of these paintings? Many and excellent artists worked in that church, and amongst others Fra Ambrogino, a disciple of the German. Moreover, some of these windows were removed in 1792, and substituted by white glass, as the painted ones were much injured by time. Amongst these there may have been some by the B. James. F. Melloni attributes to him some little histories in the oratory of S. Helena, (dall' Olio,) in the Bentivogli palace, Bologna.[2] Others regard as his a small painting on glass, which is now in the house, of Professor Bianconi, (Via Mascarella,) and attribute to him, likewise, the two circlets in the church of the Misericordia, near Bologna, together with some other works on glass in the principal chapel of the College of Spain, in the same city.

Having enumerated all these paintings, which history and tradition attribute to the Blessed James of Ulm, we will close the notices of his life and works with the

[1] I would hope that the following extract may be of use in helping us to discover a window which he painted for the chapel of S. Domenico in Bologna. Irrespective of this, it shows by what means the builders and decorators of the fifteenth century procured the monies which were required for erecting and embellishing their churches: "Anno 1462, die 27 Decembris. Determinatum fuit in concilio per patres, quod frater Gulielmus debeat complere Auconam quam fecit fieri Venetiis pro Archa S. Dominici Bononiensis, et quod conventus debeat dare sibi litteras sigillatas sigillo conventus in bona forma, habito prius consensu conventus continentes quod *ipse frater Gulielmus possit eleemosinas quaerere ubique terrarum pro ipsa Ancona.*"

[2] Memorie della Beata Elena.

narrative of a fact, which we have collected from the writings of M. Emile Thibaud. Jean de Bruges, who is generally believed to have been the discoverer of oil painting, is said to have invented a method of tinting the leaves of glass in the furnace. Thibaud, however, would maintain that James of Ulm is primarily entitled to this honor, and he states that our friar was the first who discovered the method of giving glass a diaphonous yellow tint, by the application of oxide of silver. He relates that the friar was one day engaged preparing glass at the furnace, when a vessel of silver falling on the lime, which he used as a stratum, a portion of the silver was fused, and the glass with which it came in contact assumed a yellowish tinge. This fact was subsequently noted down in all the books relating to the art of glass-painting.[1]

It reflects great credit on an artist to be able to perpetuate himself in his disciples. The Angelico left Benozzo Gozzoli and Gentile da Fabriano heirs of his style; but the Blessed James of Ulm, far more fortunate, found successors in his own convent, and he not only transmitted to them his artistic power, but even his very sanctity. These were Fra Ambrogino and Fra Anastasio. The former was born in Soncino, in the Milanese. Leandro Alberti, a contemporary, and religious of the same convent, writes that he was eminently skilled in glass-painting, and that there was no man of his times who surpassed him. He likewise adds that many of his works were the admiration of Bologna. There is also honourable mention made of him in Alberti's "Description of Italy." Having recorded some celebrated literary men of Soncino, he continues, "All these splendid

[1] Bourasse Archeologie Chretienne, c. xiv., p. 260.

geniuses were contemporaries of Ambrogino, the Dominican lay-brother, who was not more famed for his sanctity than for his skill in glass-painting. Although he was only a lay-brother, he wrote the Life of the Blessed James of Germany, of whom he was a disciple."[1] Michele Pio, who gives him the title of *Blessed*, seems to have derived his knowledge of him from this notice by Alberti.[2] We are unable to point with certainty to any of his paintings on glass, and, in this respect, he resembles his master. It is certain, however, that he painted with Fra Giacomo in the cathedral of S. Petronio—and this may be said to be a proof of his ability, as the Bolognesi employed none but the most excellent masters to decorate that church. Echard and Quietif, in the "Library of Dominican Writers," date Fra Ambrogino's death A. D. 1517, the year in which Fra Bartolomeo della Porta died in Florence. The memory of this good lay-brother shall be always venerated by his Order, for his skill as a glass-painter, for his virtues, and for having described the wonderful life of the Blessed James of Ulm, which subsequently afforded matter for these written by Prierio, Flaminio, Alberti, and Melloni. We have thought it fair to make the following extract from a letter which, in his own unadorned style, he addressed to the General of the Order:—"I well remember that mirror of religion and holy life, the Blessed lay brother, Fra Jacopo of Germany, whose unworthy disciple I have been. I slept with him during one year on the same sack, and I have heard many secrets from his holy mouth, which are worthy of being treasured." The two biographers already quoted think that he was the author of another legend relating to the Blessed Luchina da Soncino, of the third

1 Loc. Cit. p. 160.

2 Uomini illustri dell' Ordine di S. Domenico.

Order of S. Dominic, which is condensed in Pio's work on the Illustrious Men of the Preaching-Friars.[1]

As to Fra Anastasio, a lay-brother of the same institute and convent, we are ignorant of his country, cognomen, and works; neither could I have known anything of him were it not for the kindness of Vannini, who has kindly communicated to me an extract which he made out of the public archives of Bologna. In a memorandum concerning the Ark of S. Dominic, which was commenced April 10, 1521, we find that Fra Anastasio succeeded Petronio Bolognese, who held the office of Archist[2] from 1512 to 1521. We will give the extract in the simple and affectionate style of the lay-brother:—

"After him my beloved and dear master and predecessor was appointed (Archist); he was a most devout man—wholly a man of God and of our Blessed Founder, S. Dominic. He was a rosy, lively person of the middle height; and I am certain that the beauty of his soul was reflected on his body; I often thought him a cherub, and one of his hands was worth my whole body. He possessed a fine intellect; he was very skilful in glass-painting; he was a disciple and imitator of the Blessed Giacomo. For the space of eight years, most faithfully, fervently, and devoutly, and with the greatest exemplarity and integrity he served his and our good Father, S. Domenico; and by him, doubtless, he was richly rewarded. On Pentecost night, as he was going to kiss the sacred Ark, I said to him, walk slowly and cautiously, my dearest master, to your cell; and in the month of July he had a rupture, and, after receiving all

[1] Bibliotheca Script. Ord. Prædic. v. 2, p. 35.

[2] The Archists were the custodians of the shrine of S. Dominic; and we find distinct mention of similar functionaries in our own annals. V. Reeves' learned work on the Antiquities of Down and Connor.

the sacraments, he slept in the Lord. He was buried with his fathers on the following day."[1] From this it would appear that he learned the art from the German, that he survived Fra Ambrogino twelve years, that he taught the writer of this record the art of glass-painting, and that he died in 1529. We experienced a feeling of delight in restoring to the veneration of present times and future the memory of Fra Giovannino di Marcojano, the architect of S. Maria Novella; and we are equally delighted to be able to record this distinguished glass-painter, this true imitator of the Blessed Giacomo of Ulm, who was forgotten by all the historians of the Order.

From these brief notices of the glass-painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, every one may fancy what a great collection might be made if we were able to enumerate those who flourished in the Venetian dominions, in Lombardy, and particularly in France and Germany. Though the Dominican Order could count only Fra Guglielmo di Marcillat, he, alone, would reflect honour on it in this branch of art.

[1] In the history of the duomo of Orvieto, we read that a Dominican, named Fra Mariano di Viterbo, offered to paint the windows of that cathedral, and proposed to make a trial. The directors of the building ordered him to execute a figure with various adornments, which was intended for the chapel of the holy Corporal. But being dissatisfied with the work, which was feeble in design, they invited Don Gasparre, a priest of Volterra, who likewise failed to please them. They then brought from Perugia the celebrated Benedictine monk, Francesco di Barone Brunacci, who painted some of the windows with consummate skill. I will here submit a conjecture of my own. It is likely that this Perugian glass-painter may have been a disciple of Fra Bartolomeo di Pietro, or that he followed his precepts, as they were contemporaries. The Necrology of the convent of S. Domenico di Siena, ad ann. 1515, mentions another eminent artist: Frater Raphael Peregrini Senen. artis vitrariæ peritus Ecclesiæ Sacramentis devote susceptis vii. Decemb. migravit ad Christum.

CHAPTER XV.

Reformation of Italian Art attempted by Fra Gerolamo Savonarola—His Ideas on the Subject—The Men who aided him in this attempt.

Having concluded this first volume of the Memoirs of the Dominican Artists, in which we have compendiously narrated the history of three centuries, we think that this work should be defective if we were to overlook one of the grandest and most memorable events which is recorded in the civil, religious, and artistic history of the fifteenth century. It is our intention to speak of the magnanimous attempt made by Fra Gerolamo Savonarola, to raise Italian arts from the debasement to which the licentiousness of the times had contributed to reduce them at a period when they were threatened with that ruin into which they lapsed after his death. I have said that this fact pertains to civil, religious, and artistic history, because the entire fifteenth century seems to have been epitomised in that sole, terrible orator; and, because he availed himself of civil and religious science to give art a nobler tendency. Hitherto, no one that I know of undertook to develop this subject. The first amongst the modern writers who has touched it with wonderful genius and elegance, is M. Rio; and the most valuable portion of his book on the vicissitudes of Christian Art, is that in which he speaks of this fact. Wherefore we willingly unite with M. Montalembert in returning thanks to this author, who seems to have deserved well, not only of art, but of religion, since every line he has written is a learned

commentary on the dogmas of Catholicity, regarding the imitative arts, in as much as they are ancillary to her forms of worship. Having pretermitted the two grand questions anent Savonarola's political opinions, and the part he took in the government of Florence, and without discussing whether he ignored the authority of the Pontiff in fulminating the excommunication against him, M. Rio, like a true lover of art and Christian poetry, calmly considers that truly dramatic and spirited struggle which was maintained by a simple Dominican friar against his age, in the presence of all Italy. "His object is to re-establish the reign of Christ in the heart and soul of peoples; to enlarge and extend the blessings of redemption to all the human faculties, and to all their operations. The enemy that he combats with all the energy of his soul, and all the power of his word, is Paganism, of which he has everywhere found traces—in arts and morals, in ideas as well as acts, in the cloisters, as well as in the schools of his age."[1] Without entering into a detailed account of this drama, we will barely touch that portion of it which relates to the arts; and although we confess our inability to write in the style of M. Rio's imaginative and glowing narrative, we will endeavour, nevertheless, to confirm, with authentic documents, all that he has asserted of the Ferrarese orator.[2]

[1] Du Vandalisme et du Catholicisme dans l'Art, p. 115: "Mais ce n'est pas seulement à l'histoire de l'art, c'est à l'histoire religieuse en general que M. Rio a rendu un service essentiel, en pulvirisant les mensonges à l'aide de quels les Protestants et les philosophes ont jusque a present exploité le role joué par Savonarola au profit de leurs haines contre l'Eglise Romaine. . . . M. Rio a rehabilité les opinions religieuses et politiques de ce grand homme; il a prouvé que son Catholicisme etait aussi pur que sa politique etait sage et eloigneè de la demagogie qu'on lui impute; il a reconquis pour l'Eglise la gloire et le genie de Savonarola. Qu'il en soit beni!"

[2] Savonarola was born in Ferrara, A.D. 1452.

At the termination of the fifteenth century, Italy was agitated by a tremendous movement, which foreshadowed the breaking up of the old feudal society, and the genesis of the present. The people were making their last struggle to liberate themselves from these tyrants, great and small, who exerted all their energies to retain and defend every inch of ground that they had usurped in the days of internecine discord. Nor more pacific or less unhappy was the condition of the Church, which, after a long contest against schism and heresy, beheld her influence diminished, and the veneration and affection of many waxing cold. The invention of printing aiding the study of the classics, and, as it were, broadcasting the seeds of erudition, shook the foundations of the old Aristotelian edifice, opened a new highway to genius, and gave study new direction. From these causes the following consequences were derived:— In policy no age ever surpassed the fifteenth century in wickedness, for it fought, not with arms and valour, but but with fraud and poisons; and few ever equalled it in the corruption of morality. In religion there appeared the signs of these heresies which, in the following century, tore such a great portion of Europe from the Roman Church. The study of the classics during that century did little for letters; it neither refined language nor consoled philosophy; but merely prepared the world for that luminous period called the age of Leo X. The Medici, who were intent on securing the dominion of Tuscany, strove to corrupt the people and to debauch them by their festivals and pageants. Like all other oppressors of liberty, they thought to win the people by their promises and bribes. Such was the policy of Pericles in Greece, and of Augustus in Rome. When the instances of Pico della Mirandola caused the Medici to invite Savo-

narola to Florence, the friar found pride and infidelity in the men of learning, in the people and the artists licentiousness—in all classes a turbulent restlessness, an ennui of actual evils, and an anxious expectation of something novel. When the conditions of society have reached this term, the very nature of the times creates singular men to sway it; and in fact, if they be not able to rule and wield the movement, they must perish in it. Savonarola believed himself destined to perform a grand mission, moral, intellectual, artistic, and political; and he at once cast himself boldly into that tremendous conflict of ideas, passions, and interests in which only one out of a thousand escapes, while the generality are victimised and exhibited to all future generations to prove how fatal it is to have been gifted, in such times, with a soul that soars above the ordinary level of intelligence.

Every quality that is most glowing and impassioned in popular and religious eloquence; all that the genius and imagination of an orator can communicate to a people as fervid and imaginative as himself, was witnessed in Florence during the eight consecutive years that beheld Fra Gerolamo wielding dominion over that great Republic. The Annals of Greece or Latium record no eloquence so powerful as that of the Friar. In the thirteenth century, a voice went forth from the Dominican cloisters, inviting the Lambertazzi and Geremei in Bologna, and the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Florence, to renounce their murderous animosities; and at this voice, which sped from mouth to mouth, from Fra Giovanni da Vicenza to Fra Latino Malabranca, from Fra Jacopo da Varagine, to Fra Bartolomeo di Vicenza, all the people "shut in by the Alps and sea," fraternised. In the sixteenth century this same voice resounded in the woods of America, striving to burst the bonds of a

people cruelly oppressed, and the words and the virtues of the venerable bishop of Chiapa, Fra Bartolomeo di Las Casas, obtained some alleviation of the afflictions which the Spanish tyrants inflicted on the poor Indians. This sublime mission cost Las Casas and his predecessors toil of mind and body: but far more arduous was the mission of Fra Gerolamo; for although they all had but one common end to achieve, the enemies against whom he had to combat, were of a very different order. Nor would the eloquence and splendid virtues of the bishop of Chiapa have saved him from the poignards of the exterminating Spaniards, if he had not been overshadowed by the dreaded power of Charles the Fifth. It is not our province to speak of the political influence which Savonarola exercised in the Government of Florence, and we would rather refer the reader to what Nardi, Guicciardini, and especially Bernardino Segni have written of him. "Fra Gerolamo," say the latter, "who conferred the blessing of free government on our country, should be ranked amongst the good legislators, and as such, should be honoured and loved by the Florentines, just as much as Numa was loved by the Romans, Licurgus by the Lacedæmonians, and Solon by the Athenians."[1] When I reflect how great must have been the efficacy of Savonarola's language, which could raise a people so thoroughly corrupted to a sense of their own dignity—when I remember that he alone effected that wonderful revolution, which is usually the work of years of toil; I grieve to think that in our days, sacred, and popular eloquence, seems all but extinct. As to the wondrous change that Savonarola wrought in Florence, let us hear

[1] Storie Fiorent. Had Segni lived in our times he would have added, "or as much as Washington is loved by the Americans."

Burlamacchi, who was an ocular witness:—"The people rose from their beds at midnight to go to the sermon, and they came to the doors of the cathedral, waiting uncovered, till they were opened; nor did they complain of the inconvenience, nor of the cold, nor of the air, nor of standing in the winter-time on the marble, and amongst these were young and old, women and children, of every sort, all filled with great joy, and going to the sermon, as though it were to a wedding. In the church, there was profound silence, every one going to his place with taper in hand, and such as could read, read the office, and others said other prayers. Amongst such a multitude, not a whisper was heard, till the children came, who sang some hymns, with such sweetness, that Paradise seemed to have been opened. Thus, they waited, three or four hours, till the Father ascended the pulpit, etc. (p. 27.) * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"They no longer sang profane songs, but spiritual canticles, a great many of which were composed at that time—they sometimes chaunted them in chorus on the highways, as Friars do in the choir, and with great jubilee whilst at their work, so wide-spread was this great fire everywhere! Mothers were seen in the streets reciting the office with their children. When they sat at table, after the benediction, they observed silence, and they listened to a person reading the lives of the Holy Fathers, and other devout works, and in particular, the sermons of the Father, (Savonarola,) and others of his works." And at page 80:—"The women dressed with greatest modesty, and to effect a reform in this particular, they sent a deputation, of their own body, to the Signory, with great solemnity. The children did the same, and

sent a deputation to the Governors of the City, praying them to enact laws for the protection of good morals."[1]

This wonderful eloquence found its way to the hearts of all classes: the plebeian, the monk, the priest, nay, and even the grand intellects, native, as well as Ultramontane, whom the Medici retained in their court, bowed before its majesty. Rio has truthfully observed that no other man, no matter how famed, was ever followed by such a long array of celebrities; and, indeed, it would be difficult to persuade oneself that it was merely to honour the friar, since we find amongst his most enthusiastic admirers philosophers, poets, artists in every branch, painters, sculptors, architects, and engravers, who presented themselves to him as his most pliant instruments in this grand social reform.[2] Foremost amongst these was the Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, on whom an admiring age bestowed the epithet of "Phœnix of Intellects;" then came Angelo Poliziano, a polished writer of the Medicean court; Marsilio Ficino; the Canon Sacromoro; the two Benivieni; Giorgio Vespucci, uncle to the great navigator; Zanobi Acciaiuoli; Tommaso Seratico, all of whom were famed for their knowledge of Greek and Roman literature. Some of them, not satisfied with being classed amongst his admirers, resolved to follow the observances of his domestic life, and took the habit of the Order; and Mirandola, whom death prevented from pursuing a like course, desired that his body should be consigned to the tomb, clothed in the costume of S. Dominic, and in-

[1] Vita del P. F. Gerolamo Savonarola, scritta dal C. P. Burlamacchi. Lucca, 1764.

[2] Loc. Cit. p. 341.

terred beside Poliziano, in the church of S. Mark, where they had both often listened to the preaching of Fra Gerolamo.

None but those who have perused the Chronicles of the Convent of S. Marco, could believe what numbers of the Florentine nobility hastened to enrol themselves under the banner of S. Dominic, in order to be near to this wonderful man.[1] But that which exceeds all powers of imagination is the influence which he exercised over the Florentine artists. Vasari compares it to a delirium, so great was his power over their hearts and souls: for they not only adopted all his ideas of what should be the moral tendency of art, but also declared themselves ready to suffer any amount of toil, and to confront the rage of a brutal faction, sooner than abandon him in the tremendous struggle that he maintained for his country and her Arts. Some of them paid dearly for their devotion, for they either fell beneath the assassin's stiletto or were driven into exile. Others, when the terrible tragedy was ended, abandoned the cultivation of these arts which formed their delight during the life-time of Fra Gerolamo. The history of these facts is given by men who were not the partisans of Savonarola, but by the creature of the Medici, Giorgio Vasari, who confesses himself unable to account for that mighty influence which Fra Gerolamo exercised over the most distinguished geniuses of his times.

[1] So great was the number of those who took the habit, that the convent of S. Marco, which had to be enlarged, counted two hundred inmates. All the Camaldulese monks in Florence sent a deputation to Savonarola, beseeching him to invest them with the Dominican habit, and receive them into his Order. Burlamacchi, who conveyed their request, was informed by Fra Gerolamo that he could not grant their prayer, and that they should return to their convents, and live according to the rule of their Founder, which was in every respect calculated to make them perfect men. V. Burlamacchi.

The artists who adopted Savonarola's ideas were by far the most distinguished men of the Florentine school in all the branches of design; and there is no one who will not admit the great excellence of Giovanni delle Corniole, as an engraver on stone; of Baldini and Sandro Botticelli, in copper-plate engraving; of Cronaca, in architecture; of the Robbia family, in all the branches of the plastic art; of Baccio da Monte Lupo, in sculpture; of Baccio della Porta and Lorenzo di Credi in painting; and of Bettuccio and Eustachio, of Florence, in miniaturing. And the very same motive that induced many of the Florentine nobility to retire from the world, and pass their days with that singular man, impelled many an artist to ask the habit at his hands. Elsewhere we shall see what numbers were invested by him in the convent of S. Marco, and in that of Fiesole.[1]

Surrounded by such a galaxy of artists and literati, Savonarola began to unfold his ideas to both. His object was to convert the literary man from infidelity, and to impress him with the proper notions of Christianity. As to the artists, the scope of all his reasonings was to rescue the imitative arts from that immoral tendency which was so much encouraged by the licentiousness of the times; for they not only delighted in depicting the *nude*, and representing foulest abominations, but treated with contempt the very subjects suggested by religion itself. Nothing was then more common than to select women of depraved life as originals for portraits of the Madonna and other Saints; nor need we say that such practices brought dishonour on religion and scandalized

[1] Amongst the artists who opposed Savonarola, were Mariotto Albertinelli and Piero di Cosimo, Florentine painters. Burlamacchi states that Baccio da Monte Lupo fled the city in order to escape the poignards of Fra Gerolamo's enemies.

the faithful. It is true, indeed, that abuses of this sort were still more flagrant in the following century, in the days of Giulio Romano, Tiziano, and Coreggio, but the far-seeing eye of the Ferrarese clearly beheld the debasement which should inevitably prevail, if he did not warn the cultivators of art of the ignominy with which they would cover themselves; and of the direful evils that should befal their country, if they devoted their genius to propagate such foul contamination. Alas! they knew not that corruption always precedes the loss of liberty; and they took little heed of that maxim which we read in Tacitus: that the easiest way to conquer and enslave a people is to debauch it. Was it not thus that the Romans subjugated Britain, Gaul, and Germany? It was against men of this class that Savonarola thundered from the pulpit, and he also predicted the tremendous evils which they were likely to bring on his country. It may be that the future was revealed to him, and that he beheld the Imperialists besieging Florence. Who knows but that he saw in prophetic vision the last struggle of the Republic, which, despite of valour and chivalry, lapsed once more into the power of the Medicean tyrants! Knowing the power which the imitative arts exercised over that imaginative people, and that they might be made instrumental in the social reform, he set about developing his ideas of them, by going back to the general principles of æsthetics, and giving a new definition of the beautiful. This, he maintained, should not be understood to be a mere pleasing of the senses, but that the senses should be the media for conveying it to the heart and soul, and enamouring it of virtue. He never would separate his ideal of the beautiful from that of truth and decorum. Perhaps, it may be better to hear himself: "In what does beauty consist? In colour-

ing? no: In form? no: but beauty is a form that results from the proportion and correspondency of all the members and colours; and from this proportion there results a quality which philosophers term beauty. This is true in compound entities, but in simple ones their beauty is the light. Behold the sun; its beauty consists in possessing light: behold the blessed spirits, the beauty of whom is *light:* behold God, who, because he is most lucid, is beauty itself. The beauty of every creature is the more perfect, the more closely it is assimilated to the beauty of God; and the body is beautiful in proportion to the beauty of the soul. Suppose two women whose bodies are equally beautiful: fancy one of them to be of holy life, and the other immoral; you will find that the holy woman will be more loved by every one than the wicked woman, and that all eyes will be turned on her. I now speak of carnal men. Suppose a holy man, whose body is deformed—you will find that every one respects him, and, although deformed, his sanctity seems to be reflected in his countenance. Now fancy what must have been the beauty of the Virgin, who possessed such sanctity—sanctity that shone from all her features. Imagine how beautiful was Christ, who was God and Man!"[1] Every one must perceive that the Angelico realised all these theories; for no painter ever excelled him in giving to his images the beauty of an immortal soul. Having given these general notions of the *Beautiful*, Savonarola proceeds to denounce the licentiousness of artists, who made painting subservient to the lusts of the great, instead of an eloquent language for inculcating virtue and morality; and, to overwhelm them with shame, he quotes a Gentile author. "Aristotle," he

[1] Prediche Quadrigesimali del P. Sav. Recitate l'anno 1495.

exclaims, "who was a pagan, tells us that we should not tolerate indecent pictures, lest children, seeing them, be corrupted; but what shall I say of you, Christian painters, who produce these nude figures? I tell you to do so no more. You, who have such paintings in your houses, should destroy them, for you would thus be doing a work pleasing to God and the Holy Virgin."[1] Directing his discourse to those who selected as models for portraits of the Saints, women whose profligacy was well known to every one, after quoting the passage in Amos, (c. v.)—"But you carried a tabernacle for your Moloch, and the image of your idols"—he pronounces the following invective:—"You have dedicated my temple and my churches to your God Moloch. See how they act in Florence! When Florentine mothers have married their daughters, they deck them out for show, till they look like nymphs; and they lead them forthwith to Santa Liberata (the cathedral). These are your idols that you have placed in my temple. The images of your gods are the images and the likenesses of the figures that you cause to be painted in the churches; and the young men say to this and that maiden: this is Magdalene; that beyond there is S. John; because you paint figures in the church which resemble this woman or that. All this is sinful, and a contempt of God. You painters act wrongly; and if you knew the scandal that results, as I know it, you would not paint such things. You introduce worldly vanities into the church. Do you believe that the Blessed Virgin was dressed as you represent her? I tell you that she was modestly dressed, and so veiled that one could scarcely see her face; and S. Elizabeth was also modest and simple in her attire. You

[1] Predica della prima Dom. di Quar.

would do well if you would cancel these indecent pictures. You represent the Virgin Mary decked out like a harlot. Oh, how is God's worship debased!"[1] It is easy to conjecture what effect such discourses as these had on the minds of the Florentine artists, many of whom swore to Savonarola that they would never again degrade the art of painting or sculpture. Not content with this, Baccio della Porta, (called in religion Fra Bartolomeo,) Lorenzo di Credi, and others, laid at the Father's feet all their designs in the *nude*, together with their other works which outraged decency. But, as Savonarola desired to impress the minds of the Florentines with a salutary horror of all such objects, he caused them all to be burned with great solemnity in the piazza of the Palazzo Vecchio. Let us hear Burlamacchi on this subject:— At the beginning of the carneval, (1497,) the Father ordered that there should be a very solemn procession, full of mysteries; and he caused to be erected in the Piazza dei Signori, a large cabin, within which were gathered all vain and lascivious things, which the children had collected from all parts of the city. The cabin was formed as we will describe: The joiners constructed a pyramid, and in its hollow placed a great quantity of brush-wood, and some gunpowder. This pyramid had fifteen steps, on which were laid and arranged, with great ingenuity, all the various offensive objects. On the first step were laid the most precious

[1] Sabbato dopo la Seconda Dom. di Quar. In another sermon on the education of youth, he speaks thus: "The bad Poets should not be read in schools: such as Ovid, (de Arte Am.,) Tibullus, Catullus, and Terentius (where he speaks de Meretricibus.) Read S. Jerom, S. Augustin, and other ecclesiastical books, or Tully, Virgil, and some portions of holy Scripture. And you, masters, when you find mention of Jove and Pluto, say to your scholars: these are fabulous deities, and God alone governs the world."

foreign tapestries, on which obscene figures had been wrought; above these, on the second step, was a great number of figures and portraits of the fairest damsels of Florence, and others by most excellent painters and sculptors. On another step, were tables, cards, dice, and such like diabolical inventions. On another step were music-books, harps, lutes, guitars, cymbals, trumpets, and various other instruments. Then came the adornments of women—false hair, mirrors, perfumes, Cyprus powders, and similar vanities. On another step were the works of the Latin and modern poets, such as Morganti, Boccaccio, Petrarcha, and the like. Then followed masques, beards, liveries, and all such carneval trumpery. There were also many very beautiful works of the chisel and pencil, together with ivory and alabaster chess-men, for which a Venetian merchant offered the Signory twenty thousand crowns; but instead of getting them, they painted him, from the life, and enthroned him on the top of the pyramid, *as King of all these vanities.* . . . At length, four men approached, with lighted torches, and set fire to the cabin, mid the ringing of bells, and the sounding of fifes and trumpets, so that every one seemed enraptured on the occasion of this festivity. The flames mounted to heaven, and all the vanities were consumed."[1] This spectacle was renewed A.D. 1498, the last of Fra Gerolamo's Apostolic career.

And, here, it sickens the soul to think that this solemn triumph, which he had achieved over the licentiousness of his age, should soon be followed by error and immorality. The partisans of the Medici, who were working for their restoration: a ruler far more potent than the Medici; the libertine artists who battened on corruption,

[1] Burlamacchi. Loc. Cit. p. 113.

and who had fallen in popular esteem; the literary men, too, who could not tolerate the severe maxims of the Friar, all conspired, and swore to effect Savonarola's overthrow. Then arose the sect of the Arrabbiati, who were the partisans of everything infamous, and who thirsted for vengeance. Foiled in their first attempts, they retired for a while, to knit themselves more closely together, and seizing the occasion of the disputation[1] on May 23rd, 1498, they inaugurated their triumph. In that very square, and on that very pyre whereon, a few months before, Savonarola had attempted to consume revived Paganism, he, himself, was burned. Illustrious, and hapless victim! in thee was realised that aphorism of Macchiavelli—"Ill fares it with prophets who expose their unarmed breasts to the fury of factions."[2] But though his enemies destroyed his body, they could not destroy his memory, which has been honorably recorded by every writer who does not shrink from stating truth. For more than two centuries, on the anniversary of his death, the ground that drank his blood, has been covered with garlands, and this will attest the veneration in which the Friar is held, and prove that his grand precepts have not perished in the memory of the Florentines.

Ten years after Savonarola's death on an ignominious gibbet, Raffaello painted him amongst the Doctors of the

[1] This is an allusion to the ordeal of fire, to which Savonarola blindly consented, and, as it were, signed his own death-warrant. V. the Life and Times of Savonarola, where this terrible scene is very well described.

[2] Savonarola seems to have had a presentiment of the tragic termination of his apostolic career. Nothing else can be collected from these memorable words: "Go read the sacred books, and you will see that all the prophets were murdered. So too, I think, it shall be with me. This is the reward that I receive from this people."—*Oraz. della Renovatione della Chiesa*, lib. i., page 51.

Catholic Church, in the halls of the Vatican, and this is his most splendid religious rehabilitation—the most luminous proof of his innocence, and the most convincing evidence of the perfidy of his persecutors. Julius II. charged Raffaello to execute these grand works, and surely he would not have allowed an *impious man*, or one who outraged the honor of the Pontificate, to figure amongst the champions of the church, in the "Disputation on the Sacrament." Mark how Julius proclaimed Savonarola's innocence:—[1]

"The death of the Friar preceded, by a few years, the death of the Republic!"

Having thus briefly described the ideas of Fra Gerolamo, as well as his calamitous death, it remains for us to vindicate his character against those who call him an apostle of barbarism—an iconoclast, and an enemy to the fine arts. The facts we have narrated from Burlamacchi have been distorted to furnish grounds for these accusations, and to prove that Savonarola was utterly insensible to the beautiful in arts as well as letters. But I am, persuaded that every dispassionate reader of Fra Gerolamo's history, will confess that he did not denounce the legitimate use of either arts or letters, but simply inveighed against those who made them subservient to the demoralization of society. That public and solemn spectacle of the destruction of so many lascivious objects, seems to have been necessitated by the very nature of the evil

[1] Filippo Moisè, Illustrazione Storico-Artistica del Palazzo vecchio. Fir. 1843. Rio Poesie Chretienne, c. viii., p. 361. Rosini endeavours to prove that the portrait in the "Disputation" is not Savonarola's, and has given an engraving of it in his History of Painting. In my judgment this is the strongest confirmation of the generally received opinion, and any one who takes the trouble of examining it must find that it bears a most striking resemblance to the portrait of Fra Gerolamo painted by Fra Bartolomeo.

which demanded a prompt and desperate remedy. Were we to condemn Savonarola for this, we should also condemn the Apostle Paul, who not only caused such books as sinned against morality to be consumed, but also such as were calculated to lure the faithful from the cultivation of Christian knowledge.[1] A writer of the last century did not hesitate to pronounce Paul a fanatic for conduct like Savonarola's. Certain it is that the artists who espoused Fra Gerolamo's doctrines, did not abandon painting or sculpture, as they would have done, if he had anathematized either of these arts; far otherwise, they did nothing more than give them a right direction, no longer contaminating either pencil or chisel with obscene representations, and their example may be said to have preserved many from corruption. That the Friar was a lover of art is, I think, very evident to such as have read our history. If this had not been the fact, it would be hard to understand how so many and such illustrious painters and sculptors could have entertained the kindliest feelings for the man who denounced the arts which they professed, or have submitted to so many grievous trials for their devotion to his principles. Nay, more, when Fra Gerolamo hurled his most scathing invectives against those who desecrated the temple of the living God by their obscene paintings, did he not thus vindicate the character of Catholicity from the aspersions of her enemies, who had ample reason to accuse us of a serious innovation? In a word, did he not anticipate the decision of the Tridentine Council, which ordains that no work of art should find a place within the sacred precincts, that was not calculated to

[1] "And many of them who had followed curious arts, brought together their books, and burnt them before all; and counting the price of them, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God, and was confirmed."—Acts, xix.

convey a moral lesson and stimulate the piety of the faithful?[1]

To these arguments which to us appear conclusive, we will add some facts. Savonarola for many years belonged to a congregation which had always cherished and cultivated art. We have already seen how the Blessed Giovanni Dominici, who was its Founder, laboured to propagate and diffuse the love of arts in all the cloisters of men and women that he had established. In these solitudes lived and worked Fra Giovanni Angelico, and that distinguished band of miniaturists whom we have recorded, in the first book of these Memoirs; and this, in my judgment, was a most beneficial provision, since there can be nothing better calculated to fill the heart and soul with chastened and sublime ideas than the divine art of design and painting, when directed by that spirit of piety that glowed in the bosom of the Angelico. We are assured on the authority of Burlamacchi, that when Fra Gerolamo determined to revive the primitive rigid observance in his convent of San Marco, he resolved to promote the study of the arts of design which he regarded as essential to his grand reform. "He determined," says Burlamacchi, "that the lay-brothers should apply themselves to some of the arts which were not likely to distract them, such as sculpture, painting, mason's work, writing, &c.; and that by the exercise of these arts, they might acquire means for the support of the convent. This, he thought, would enable his preachers to pronounce the truth more fearlessly, and render them independent of those who would not contribute alms when their vices were openly attacked and

[1] Sess. xxv. c. i. "Omnis denique lascivia vitetur; ita ut procaci venustate imagines non pingantur, nec ornentur."

exposed." This prudential arrangement had the happiest results, so much so, that during his life time, or at least a few years after his tragic death, a chosen band of artists entered the convent of San Marco, to walk in the foot-prints and revive the examples of the Blessed Angelico; a fact that never could have been realised if Savonarola, who was the president of that Dominican Congregation, had been an Apostle of barbarism, an iconoclast, and implacable enemy of the imitative arts. Let us take another passage from his history to corroborate what we have here asserted. The most noble Lady Camilla Rucellai was so deeply impressed by the holy preaching of Fra Gerolamo, that she resolved to renounce the world, for the sake of Jesus Christ, and to erect a convent, within whose walls she might end her career, in the practices of austere piety. Having opened her mind to Savonarola, and being encouraged by him, she built and endowed the magnificent monastery of S. Caterina da Siena in Via Larga; and there, carrying out Savonarola's reform, she introduced, at his suggestion, the arts of painting and modelling in plaster. Most happy were the results, so much, that no other convent in all Italy produced abler female artists than this one, founded by Rucellai. A learned and accurate writer attests, that the fine arts were most lovingly cultivated in this convent till the beginning of the last century, that is to say, till the suppression of the religious Orders. "There exist," says he, "in this monastery, many glorious monuments, which evidence the zeal and piety of Savonarola, who, to protect its religious inmates from the dangers of idleness, introduced the noble arts of painting, design, and miniature, in which these pious women became so excellent, that their works were

sought in Rome, Naples, Lombardy, and through all Italy."[1]

This convent adopted all the observances practised in that of San Marco, and may be said to have rivalled it in the cultivation of the Arts. This accomplished sisterhood will furnish matter for us in the second volume of these Memoirs.

We need not dwell longer on Savonarola, for we are conscious that every one who desires to see art employed as an efficacious means for inculcating religious and moral precepts, will applaud his magnanimous attempt to rescue it from degradation. He would not have it ancillary to base and revolting passions: he struggled to raise it to the dignity of the Evangelical language, and though his efforts failed, we cannot refuse to do homage to the motives that influenced him.

[1] Della Storia di Fr. Gerolamo Savonarola. Livorno, 1782. This most complete and accurate life of Fra Gerolamo, was written by Father Barsanti di S. Marco. M. P. J. Carle published another life of this great man. Paris, 1842. It is replete with poetry and devotion.

APPENDIX.

ARTISTS WHOM SAVONAROLA INFLUENCED TO TAKE THE DOMINICAN HABIT.

MINIATURISTS.

Fra Benedetto or Bettuccio of Florence, invested November 7th, 1459; and professed by F. Savonarola, 13th November, 1496.

Fra Filippo Lappaccini of Florence, invested at the beginning of August, 1492; professed, August 3, 1493.

Fra Eustachio of Florence, invested in 1461; professed, September 12, 1497.

PAINTERS.

Fra Agostino di Paolo Del Mugello, invested in 1495; professed, 1416.

Fra Andrea, a Florentine, invested in 1500; professed, 1596.

Fra Bartolommeo Della Porta, invested at Prato, July 26, 1500; professed, 1501.

ARCHITECTS.

Fra Domenico Di Paolo, a Florentine. I do not know in what year he entered. He was a priest, and died October 5, 1501.

Fra Francesco di Prato. The time of his reception and profession does not appear. He died, December, 1522.

MODELLERS IN PLASTER.

Amongst the cultivators of this art was, probably, Fra Ambrogio della Robbia, invested by Fra Gerolamo Savonarola, in 1425. He was professed December 13, 1496.

DOCUMENTS

TO ILLUSTRATE

THE MEMOIRS OF THE DOMINICAN ARTISTS.

BOOK I.

[Chap. II., p. 23.]

"The plan of S. M. Novella is a nave with aisles, transepts with chapels at their ends, and on their east faces, and a small square-ended chapel. The nave is parted from its aisles by six arches of a broad pointed span: the arches diminish in width from west to east. The transepts have two chapels on each east face, and one apiece on a higher level and reached by some steps at the extremities; and there is a fine Pointed sacristy (built in 1350) west of the north transept. The south elevation of the south transept has a round window of twelve radiating lights, not foliated, and with trefoils between each pair of their heads and the circumference."—V. *Webb's Continental Ecclesiology.* This church is 322 feet long, 88 feet wide across the nave and aisles, and 203 feet through the transepts.

[Page 69.]

The following is the inscription on the façade of the church of S. Michele in Borgo:—

Cernite vos queso que fulgent marmore ceso
Hoc opus alarum frontis templi quoque clarum
Tempore constructum fuit, ad finemq. reductum
Hic patris Andree laudis de culmine vere
Vulterri natus fuit Abbas ipse prefatus,
Infrascriptorum numero tunc et monachorum
Cei ductoris claustralis rite prioris
Anselmique, Boni, Benedictum junge Guidoni
Sic Plancus, Michael, Andreas, Angelus inde
Camaldulenses sunt hic, et cenobienses
Laude supernorum insistunt angelicorum
Anno milleno trecento tres dato deno
Cesar et Henricus annus regnandoque primus
GUGLIELMUS sane pisanus sumite plane
Hic operis factor caput extat et ordinis actor
Ergo tu spector qui respicis hec quoque lector
Summo dans laudes Patri quo denique plaudes
Dic animabus eorum, da bona Christe polorum.

(V. Alessandro da Morrona, *Pisa Illustrata*, vol. III. p. 1, cap. VI.)

[Chap. vii. p. 69.]

ANCIENT CHRONICLE OF THE CONVENT OF S. CATHERINE OF THE ORDER OF S. DOMINIC IN PISA.

(necrology of fra guglielmo da pisa.)

"William, the lay-brother, was a famous sculptor, and did much for the enlargement of the convent. When the body of Blessed Dominic was being removed to the Arca which was sculptured by Master Nicholas of Pisa, (with whom our William worked at the same,) he (William) contrived to carry off one of the ribs of the Saint's side, not thinking of the excommunication pronounced by the Master of the Order, who was then at Bologna presiding over the general chapter. William conveyed the rib to Pisa, and reverently hid it under the altar of S. M. Magdalene. On his death-bed he bewailed his innocent fault, and revealed the fact. When the brethren found it where he told them, they removed it to the sacristy. He lived fifty-six years in the Order. May his spirit have everlasting rest in Abraham's bosom!"

[Page 70.]

(necrology of fra fazio.)

"Fazio, the lay-brother, was a master of sculpture, and a very devout and discreet man. He was for a long time janitor to the convent: and he discharged that and all other offices punctually and obediently. Full of years, he entered into the peace of the Lord, A.D. 1340."

BOOK II.

[Chap. iii., p. 172.]

CHRONICLE OF THE CONVENT OF S. DOMINIC IN FIESOLE.

In the same year, (1406,) the Ven. Fra Giovanni Dominici, was sent as orator, by the Florentine Signory, to Pope Gregory XII., who succeeded Innocent VII.; and he was retained by Pope Gregory, and employed in affairs of the Church, and created Cardinal. There remained, however, in that convent (which was unfinished) about sixteen members, the first Prior of whom was Marcus of Venice, and he was succeeded by Brother Antony de Cruce of Milan, during whose Priorate the schism was greatly augmented in the Church of God, A.D. 1409. Up to that period two men, Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII. contended for the Papacy. At length the Cardinals of the foresaid Pontiffs, who in great numbers seceded from them, held a *conciliabulum* at Pisa, and created a third Pope, namely, Alexander V., who was hitherto called Peter of Candia, a Minorite, and one of Pope Gregory's (xii.) Cardinals. But although the city of Florence sided with Alexander V., the Friars of that convent (S. Domenico at Fiesole) maintained their allegiance to Pope Gregory XII., who was their true and legitimate Pastor. But when

F. Thomas de Fermo, who was then Master of the Order, wished to coerce the conscience of the Friars, and make them acknowledge Alexander V., and when he had imprisoned the Prior of the convent in the dungeons of Florence—the Friars, to avoid the schismatical contagion, stole away, every one of them, from the convent by night, lest they might be intercepted, and guided by the Prior, journeyed on to Foligno, where the Governor of the City, and the Bishop of the same, (Federico, of the Order of S. Dom.) who remained faithful to Gregory XII., gave them the convent which belonged to the Order. Here they lived for many years according to STRICTEST DISCIPLINE. But when the pestilence came and killed the Prior and many of the religious, the discipline in that convent was relaxed.

"The aforesaid Fiesolan convent being abandoned by the Friars, for the causes we have stated, was taken possession of by some Friars from S. Maria Novella; but a short time afterwards they, too, left it, because the conditions on which they were to hold it had not been observed, and the Bishop of Fiesole seized it as a fief of his Church."

BOOK V.

[CHAP. V p. 191.]

FROM A BOOK OF MEMORANDA BELONGING TO THE CONVENT OF S. DOMINIC DI FIESOLE.

"I remember how, on the 20th of February, 1611, the illustrious Lord Mario Farnese, after having negotiated with our convent for two years, to obtain the picture of the Annunciation, painted by Fra Angelico of Mugello, a son of this house, and contemporary of S. Antonino, Archbishop of Florence, (who also belonged to this convent,) finally obtained it; and he, in consideration of this privation, gave us one thousand five hundred ducats. This painting was consigned to F. Carlo Strozzi, together with its predella, on which were painted five histories of the B. V. M., by the same painter. . . . Glory be to the Lord, and honor to our Angelic painter, from whom our convent has experienced benefits for more than one hundred and sixty years."

BOOK VII.

[CHAP. VIII. p. 251.]

HISTORY OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ORVIETO.

(ROME, 1791.)

CONTRACT BETWEEN THE BUILDERS OF THE CATHEDRAL AND FRA GIOVANNI ANGELICO, JUNE 14, 1447.

"In the name of God, amen. After many conversations with the painter, . . . he was engaged to paint the new chapel near the Episcopate. . . . The chamberlain employed Fra Giovanni, Son of Peter, of

the Order of Preaching-Friars, to paint all the pictures of said chapel, on condition that Fra Giovanni would personally execute said pictures, and engage Benozzo Gozzoli of Florence and James de Coli, and that he would exercise all care and diligence."

"He is, likewise, to see that the figures of said pictures shall be beautiful and laudable.

"The engagement is to commence on to-morrow, which is the 15th of the current month of June. Item. He is to paint each year with the said artists, during the months of June, July, August, and September, till the whole chapel shall have been finished Item. He is to execute the whole work without fraud, and as becometh a good painter.

"And the aforesaid chamberlain, . . . hath solemnly promised and sworn to Fra Giovanni, then present, and representing his heirs, and likewise to the said Benozzo, and John and James, to give and disburse to brother John, for his works, as salary for said four months each year, at the rate of CC. gold ducats, for each and every complete year. Videlicet, for said four months, the third part of CC. ducats.

"Item, to Benozzo, each month, seven ducats of the same value; to John, two ducats, and to James, one ducat.

"Item, the said master will give the painter all the colours necessary for said pictures, . . . irrespective of the salary.

"Item, independently of the salary, bread and wine in abundance; and XX. libras each month, . . . as long as they are working.

"Item, he will defray all their expenses up to the present day.

"Item, whilst the scaffolding is being set up, said Master John, (the Angelico,) will furnish the designs of the pictures and figures which he is to paint on the ceiling of the chapel.

"All which articles were agreed on. Stipulated before us, Peter Mei, goldsmith, and Peter Natii, of the city of Orvieto, and Master Giovannino de Senis, chief of the superintendents."

[From the same Work.]

(28th September, 1447.)

"Fra Giovanni, of the Order of S. Dominic, Painter, was engaged to paint in the new chapel of said church, with his own person, and the persons of Benozzo of Florence, whom he brought with him for this work. . . He fully satisfied the chamberlain, ... that he would not insist on the agreement, by which he was entitled to one hundred and three, gold florins, . . . which he was to get from said building, as well for himself as for the said Benozzo. . . . And for three months . . . he declared himself content. . . . The said Master John swore on the Holy Gospels . . . that he would

at all times observe and attend. Moreover, for greater caution, he exonerated said building, ... by stipulation, etc. etc., in the presence of Jacopo Petri, Petro Putii, Master John of Peter, alias Pintalvecchia painter, and Pancrazio Luce, witnesses."

[Chap. viii. p. 256.]

NECROLOGY OF FRA GIOVANNI ANGELICO IN THE CHRONICLE OF S. DOMENICO AT FIESOLE.

"Fra Giovanni de Mugello, died on the . . . . . This was a great painter, and as he was a devout man at heart, so were his pictures full of devotion. He painted many works for the altars of various churches, chapels, and confraternities. Three of them are in this Fiesolan convent; one in S. Marco, Florence; two in the church of the Holy Trinity, of the Order of Valombrosa; one in S. Maria degli Angeli, of the Camaldulese; one in S. Egidio, in the hospital of S. Maria Nuova. Some minor pictures are in the Confraternities of the children. He painted the cells of San Marco, and the chapter-room, and some figures in the cloister. He likewise painted some figures here in the refectory at Fiesole, in the chapter-room, which is now the guest-house. He painted the Papal chapel, and part of a chapel in the cathedral of *the old city;* and many other works did he paint splendidly: and at length, after having lived in all simplicity, he rested in the Lord."

ANNALS OF THE CONVENT OF S. MARCO, FLORENCE.

"The picture of the great altar, and the figures of the chapter-room, and of the first cloister, and of all the upper cells, and of the Crucifixion in the refectory, were all painted by a certain friar of the Order of S. Dominic, of the convent of Fiesole, who was reputed to be the greatest master of the pictorial art in Italy. He was called Fra Giovanni, and was a man of great modesty and religious life."

ILLUSTRIOUS MEN OF THE PREACHING-FRIARS.

(six books.)

BY LEANDRO ALBERTI.

[Book v.]

BLESSED JOHN OF FIESOLE.

"John, of Fiesole, the Hetrurian, a man of great sanctity, and most celebrated for his paintings, died at Rome XII. Kal. of March, MCCCCLV., and was buried in a manner worthy such a man, in the church of S. Maria

sopra Minerva, in a marble tomb, which Nicholas V. caused to be adorned with two elegantly written epitaphs. This venerable man was so addicted to all the observances of his rule, that even whilst working in the Pope's palace, he would not omit a single tittle of it. For when the Pontiff came one day to visit the works he was executing in the chapel, which still exists, he said to him, 'John, thou must eat meat to-day, for thou hast laboured much'—whereon Giovanni answered, 'Holy Father, the prior of the convent did not give me this privilege;'—then quoth the Pope, 'I, who have power over all, grant thee this indulgence.' From this, it is easy to imagine how strict was the rule of life, followed by this illustrious member of our Order. Pope Nicholas venerated this man for his integrity and excellent morals."

BOOK II.

[Chap. xi. p. 281.]

CHRONICLE OF THE CONVENT OF S. MARIA DELLA MISERICORDIA, (TAGGIA,) OF THE PREACHING-FRIARS, MS.

"Chapel of S. Peter Martyr, A.D. 1474. The nobleman, Bartholomeus Luprus, bequeathed to it a hundred pounds; (libras centum.) but in the year 1522, January 21st, Dominic Oddi made his last will, in which he devised all his property to the chapel of S. Peter Martyr; and he ordered the picture to be executed as it now is, leaving for the expense of the same twenty-five ducats. . . . The Rev. F. Emmanuel Maccarj de Pigna, painted that picture. It represents our Lord Crucified: on His right is the Blessed Dominic: on the left S. Catherine V. et M.: at foot of the Crucifix (on the right) is S. Hieronymus striking his breast with a stone: on the left is S. Peter Martyr. In a raid made by the Turks, that painting received much injury from the strokes of their axes—they did great damage to the arms faces, and breasts. But (what should never be forgotten) a certain priest impiously painted spectacles on the face of our Blessed Founder, S. Dominic, and as he went homewards, enjoying his sacrilegious exploit, he was struck blind, and remained so till the end of his days. Many ocular witnesses of this just punishment are still living."

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

As there was an interval of a year between the publication of the first and second volume of these Memoirs, the author has deemed it advisable to supply the following remarks.

P. 12. (Note.)—After a more careful perusal of the Florentine Guide Book, we admit that Signor Fantozzi is perfectly right in what he states concerning the Carraja Bridge.

P. 44.—David had ascertained the true date of the erection of the *Ark of S. Dominic* before the publication of this work. See his Memoirs, concerning the Ark of S. Dominic, Bologna, 1842.

P. 82.—Vincenzo Vannini has discovered the names of various artificers belonging to the Dominican Order, in some MS. Memoirs preserved in the Ercolani Library at Bologna. The first of these is a Fra Domenico of Bologna, who is styled an Engineer. He is mentioned in the will of Pietro Martini. This friar (who is also mentioned in the *Annali Domenicani di Bologna)* may have been engaged at the primitive church of our Order, which was built after the designs of Niccola Pisano. The second of these, discovered by Vannini, is Fra Evangelista Marani, the architect. He furnished the design of the portico for the Church of S. Dominic—and the original design is still preserved in the Demanio. There are also notices of Fra Bartol. da Vigevano and Fra Gerol. Mamolini, who worked as head-masons at the building of the library of the convent, in 1466 and 1467.

P. 146.—The following notices regarding Fra Eustachio, the Miniaturist, occur in the Chronicle of the Dominican Convent (di S. Spirito) in Siena. "A.D. MDII., when Fra Malatesta Sacromoro was prior of this convent, Fra Eustachio, a Florentine lay-brother, finished the miniaturing of the Antiphonary of the Saints. This work is in two volumes, and it was commenced at the expense of the community many years before. . . . . Fra Eustachio was brought hither for the purpose of miniaturing and binding this Antiphonary; and he restored all the books belonging to the choir and sacristy." The choral books of this convent do not exist at present.

P. 191 —The *lucidi* of this Gradino are now in the possession of the Metzger family, in Florence. It represents Christ Risen, and in the under part a band of Angels playing various instruments. I have been told that Metzger bought this Gradino, by the Angelico, for 700 dollars, and that he sold it to Signor Valentini for 900.

P. 198.—The *Coronation*, now in the Gallery degli Uffizj, was removed thither from the Church of S. Maria Nuova, and not from the Certosa.

P. 231.—The translator of Delecluze's "Essay on Lionardo da Vinci," conjectures (and with good reason) that the three little histories which adorn the cusps or triangles of the Angelico's Deposition from the Cross, are by D. Lorenzo the Camaldulese monk. He inclines to this opinion principally, because there existed the strongest friendship between these two religious artists.

P. 254.—It is thought that the two paintings executed by the Angelico for S. Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, are still in existence. Those who maintain this opinion assert, that some mediocre painter covered them with inferior productions of his own pencil, in order to conceal them from the French and other depredators, at the time of the suppression of the religious houses. We will here subjoin a list of other paintings by the Angelico, of which we had no information previous to the publication of these Memoirs. *Florence.* The Metzger family possess seven little pictures on panel: *i. e.*, two doors of a Tryptich, on one of which is represented the Ascent of the Elect into Heaven; and on the other, the Damned going down to Hell.—A S. Thomas of Aquino receiving the cincture from Angels.—A S. Peter Martyr. —Two most beautiful Angels on panel, now in the R. Gallery of Turin.—A Presepium (Manger) which has been *repainted.* There is also a Madonna holding the Divine Infant, but the rich ornamentation of the robes, particularly, causes us to doubt whether we should attribute it to the Angelico. —In the Ugobaldi Gallery, Florence, there is also a painting of the Martyrdom of SS. Cosmas and Damian, in little figures. Signor Acchille Sandrini possesses a small picture by the Angelico, representing the Virgin with the Divine Babe in her arms: this is a very beautiful work, and somewhat resembles that which the same artist executed on the wall of a dormitory in S. Marco. *Rome*—The late Count Bisenzio possessed a Madonna with the Divine Infant, surrounded by Angels and Saints: its height is one and a-half (pollici) by ten-twelfths wide. The paintings in the Convent of Monte Falco were attributed to the Angelico; but it is more likely that they were executed by Benozzo Gozzoli. In the sanctuary of Suasia (Civitella di Romagna) there is a picture of the Madonna which is popularly attributed to Fra Giovanni Angelico; but we are not able to certify the truth of this.

P. 276.—Professor Rossini says, that there is still in Mantua a Madonna painted by Fra Gerolamo Monsignori. It is in the grandiose style, and resembles that known as *Mantegnesque.* This work has been engraved and illustrated by Count Carlo d'Arco in the *Monumenti di Mantova Illustratati*, v. Rosini, *Storia della Pittura Ital.*, v. iv., p. 4, cap. 24, p. 194.

P. 278.—The copy of Vinci's "Supper," by Monsignori, was sold to a Frenchman for 13 Louis. It appears that Monsignori changed the ground of the original in his copy; converting the hall into an atrium.—V. d'Arco, loc. cit.

GLASS PAINTERS.

P. 297.—Valtancoli (Annali Pisani) states, on the authority of Tronci, that the painted window of the choir of S. Catherine's, (Pisa,) was executed by a Dominican lay brother named Andrea, as may be seen by the inscription on said window. This lay-brother was a native of Poland. The window being decorated with the armorial bearings of the Mastiani family, we may suppose that they caused it to be painted.

P. 315.—We think that some few notices regarding Fra Bartolommeo (di Pietro,) the author of the beautifully painted window in the choir of S. Domenico in Perugia, will interest the reader. We are indebted to Professor Vermiglioli, who has kindly communicated them to us. We therefore make the following extract from his *Description of the Church of S. Domenico in Perugia:*—

"It has been commonly thought that the Fra Bartolommeo of Perugia, who painted the window, and who is mentioned in the inscription, belonged to the Graziani of Perugia, and that the same family was charged to preserve this window. This opinion was popular amongst the inhabitants of our city, till Father Boarini, the Dominican, discovered in the Perugian Memoirs that the Friar who executed the window was a certain Fra Bartolommeo di Pietro di Vanni Accomandoni, a Dominican, and native of Perugia. It appears that he was living in our city in 1370, when his father made his will, in which Bartolommeo is mentioned along with his other children. This Bartolommeo is likewise mentioned in some legal documents, dated 1383. It is certain, moreover, that he was living in 1415; and this appears on the face of an agreement into which he entered regarding the execution of a window for the sacristy of the Church of S. Domenico in Perugia. Hence, we may reasonably conclude that he was the author of the *great window* of the choir, which was finished five years before the latter date. Nor would it be unreasonable to conjecture, that Benedetto da Siena (who executed various works in said church) furnished the designs for this window; from all this we conclude, that the armorial bearings of the Graziani family were introduced into the window, simply because the chapel of that family was lighted by said window; or, more probably, because the Graziani had erected the *presbytery* of the church. Pier Antonio Graziani bequeathed a sum of money, to be paid annually, for the preservation of the window which lights the presbytery and the choir. In 1574, Astorre Graziani entered into some arrangements concerning the legacy; and, finally, the Captain Felice Graziani released his family from all further responsibility in the matter, by paying 100 florins."

P. 315.—Signore Gaetano Milanesi has extracted the subjoined most interesting documents from the archives of the Duomo of Siena, and as they

relate to a distinguished glass-painter of our Order, we willingly present them to the reader. In a book entitled "*Pigioni e Fitti de' Beni dal* 1349 *al* 1404," we read, "A. D. 1404, Fra Ambrogio di Bindo, of the Sienese Dominicans, has taken from us Chatarino da Corsino, in order to execute two glass windows, one over the altar and chapel of S. Ansano, and the other over the chapel and altar of S. Vettorio. He is to provide all the necessaries,—glass, lead, etc., and he is to set up said windows in their proper places, receiving for the workmanship from two and a-half to three gold florins *per braccio;* he is not to exceed this sum, and to this agreement Giovanni Pucci and Giovanni di Donato are witnesses. For said sum Fra Ambrogio shall be bound to place the *netting* over said windows, and we are to supply him with the metal and scaffolding for said windows, and to give him something over and above as soon as they are finished."

Memoriale di Nastagio di Francesco, Scrittore dell' Opera. "Fra Ambrogio di Bindo, the Dominican, who is executing the glass-window over the altar of S. Savino and S. Vettorio."

Memoriale di Antonio di Giacomo, — 1409. "Fra Ambrogio di Bindo is to receive, on the 28th of March, twenty-two florins for a window having large figures painted thereon. Said window is over the chapel of S. Sebastian."

(Archives of the Hospital della Scala.) "April, 23, 1411, I, Guglielmo di Martino, sacristan of the hospital, and Fra Nello di Ser Giovanni, writer of said hospital, entered into the following agreement with Fra Ambrogio di Bindo. Said Ambrogio shall execute two glass-windows, together with all the tin and lead-work thereto pertaining. We bind ourselves to furnish him with the *netting* and iron that shall be required, and he is to receive a florin for every *braccio* of the workmanship. We pledge ourselves, moreover, to give him the necessary supply of oil, and also the glass. As soon as the work is finished we will pay him five soldi and *six libre.* As we desire to have armorial devices on said windows, we will furnish the design; and as the said devices were not taken into consideration heretofore, he professes his readiness to abide by the decision of Fra Guglielmo, who will now pay him three florins of the Sienese currency, to be deducted from the sum for which he has stipulated."

This Fra Ambrogio di Bindo is not mentioned in the Necrology of S. Domenico in Siena; neither is there any notice of him in the Chronicle of that city.

END OF VOL. I.

922.2 4820
M16
v.1 Lives of the most
eminent painters,
sculptors ... /

922.2 4820
M16
v.1 Lives of the most
eminent painters,
sculptors ... /
Fr. O.P. Marchese

Flora Lamson Hewlett Library
Graduate Theological Union
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709

OEMCO